Teaching for

BETTER SCHOOLS

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Teaching for Better Schools

TEACHING
for BETTER SCHOOLS

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Preface

During my first year of teaching, my sixth-grade class finished the textbook we were using two months before the end of the school year. I was desperate for a few days, but it was the most important event of my professional life. My undergraduate training had left me with the belief that *teaching was conducting classes in such a way that pupils learned the content of the textbook.* I'm sure my instructors suggested other things, but I could not hear them. I did not have any idea that pupils should or could have any part in determining what should happen in classes. But with the textbook completed that first year, my mission was accomplished and we were free to do anything that seemed worth while to us.

We took a walk through the Ohio fields and woods the next morning, a beautiful April spring day. And a study of wild flowers emerged. We read some science books we found in the library and the class began a more intensive study of how the world was formed than I had ever experienced in high school or college.

My eyes were opened to the difference between the learning that occurs when pupils do assignments and when they work on some project or problem they have deemed important enough to tackle. Never again could I be complacent about making an assignment. Since that time I have been seeking to learn how to work with pupils so that they will have real purpose, as a result of having established it themselves.

This book is a record of the results of my constant search, which has led through an elementary school, secondary schools, a bureau of educational research, four teacher training institutions, and industrial training. It is designed for teachers at all

levels. I believe the ideas advanced are as applicable for teachers of graduate students as for teachers of kindergartens.

Stress is placed on the fundamental ways of creating the environment in which learning can occur most efficiently. Little attention is given to the techniques of routine administration of the class or the methods of explaining some particular subject matter. These specifics are important tricks of the trade, but they are meaningless and ineffective unless the environment is one in which the boy or girl finds the learnings the teacher desires him to make to be worth while and important.

Teaching, as portrayed here, is assisting boys and girls to conduct their learning rather than directing their activities. The basic concept is one *of working with boys and girls on tasks the pupils and teacher agree are important,* as opposed to the idea that teaching is a process of taking pupils over successively more difficult hurdles until maximum attainment for a particular pupil is reached.

Recent research dealing with perception, motivation, mental hygiene, and group dynamics seems to invalidate generalizations about teaching that have been previously presented as principles of teaching. Some of the studies which most seriously challenge teaching as telling are presented.

Our understanding of human behavior and the learning process is growing constantly. Any conclusions concerning teaching stated at the present time can only be looked upon as *the truth known today.* New research and new experience will increase our knowledge and insights. Each of us who remains open-minded will be able to improve his own method and contribute to improved learning situations for boys and girls.

This book represents the hypotheses concerning teaching for efficient learning that I have formed from my study of the research, and have tested against my experience and the experiences of colleagues, friends, and students during the past eighteen years. They are advanced for you to test and revise in light of your own study and experience.

Kimball Wiles

Acknowledgments

So many persons have shared their ideas about teaching with me that naming all of them would be impossible. But a few have made such major contributions to my concept of teaching that it is difficult to tell where their thoughts end and mine start. In this category I place the following:

My mother, a teacher, for surrounding me from my earliest years with the conviction that teaching is an art and the noblest work in which man can engage.

Boyd H. Bode, for asking questions that caused me to question teaching as telling and to arrive at the conviction that the outcomes of an educational experience should be reconstructed values and increased skill in implementing them.

Elizabeth Rose, in whose class I observed many hours, for demonstrating many of the ways a teacher may plan, work, and evaluate with pupils.

Ray Simpson, for emphasizing the development of pupil self-direction, the use of scientific method in working out the solution of individual and class problems, and motivation as individual purpose.

Louis Raths, for interpreting evaluation as the key to effective planning and for sharing his insight concerning the relationship between emotions and efficient learning.

Mary Beauchamp, for sharing her convictions concerning the importance of the emotional climate of the classroom.

Howard Lane, for dry-witted, penetrating remarks that probed previously unchallenged assumptions I had made about the learning process.

Ted Rice, for stressing the importance of waiting for group dynamics to function and leadership to emerge in a class.

Alice Keliher, for helping me become more sensitive to the significance of the generalizations a person draws about himself and others through his classroom experience.

The members of the 1949 A.S.C.D. Yearbook Committee (William Alexander, Vernon Anderson, Donald Berger, Peggy Brogan, John Cook, Ruth Cunningham, Prudence Cutright, Frances Drag, Helen Flynn, Dorothy Gray, Steward Hamblen, Kara V. Jackson, Fay Kirkland, Phil C. Lange, Marcella Lawler, Raymond A. Olson, Robert W. Richey, Elizabeth Rose, Charles Spain, and Alice Miel), for defining the essential skills in teaching.

My children, David 10, Jon 7, and Wendy 2, for their questions and comments, which serve as indices to the teaching procedures that are effective with them.

More than anyone else, Alice Miel has helped me reach a synthesis of my understandings. During the month we spent editing *Toward Better Teaching*, the decisions we faced together helped me to organize my conclusions concerning the teaching-learning process.

To all of these and to many others I am deeply grateful for the insights they have shared with me.

In the preparation of the manuscript my wife has been of invaluable assistance as a critic and expediter. Members of methods classes and workshops in Alabama, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, California, Oklahoma, and Florida have served the essential function of testing the ideas and hypotheses contained in this book against their experiences.

Ted Rice, Mary Beauchamp, and Alice Miel read a draft of the manuscript and suggested ways to strengthen it.

Without these contributions this book never would have been written.

K. W.

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Teaching
for Better Schools

Chapter 1

What Is an Efficient Teaching-Learning Situation?

Miss Mary Niven is your aunt. Head of the English department for thirty years, she has established a reputation in the community for being a cultured woman who is well acquainted with the literary heritage.

Miss Niven will not tolerate loafing in her classes. She gives assignments and insists that all students have them prepared before they return to class. If a student is inadequately prepared or makes mistakes, she chastises him with biting satire before the whole class. And she continues her tirade until he cringes and promises to do better in the future. She fails ten to twenty-five per cent of each class in order to keep her scholastic standards high.

Her primary concern is that students learn the material in the course of study. She is willing to help any youngster who will come to her room after school to do additional work. She provides remedial work for youngsters who have fallen behind as a result of illness or absence. She believes it is the teacher's function to help pupils acquire the information that is in the textbook, and she gives unstintingly of her time to fulfill this function.

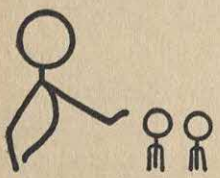
Miss Niven is critical of other teachers who do not measure up to the high standards that she sets for herself. She insists that they work for the same objectives and that they do it as efficiently as she does. She accepts warmly the teachers who are striving to meet the requirements she establishes and ignores those she feels are shirking their responsibilities.

Miss Rivers is constantly seeking better ways of teaching her courses. She experiments with new techniques of teaching reading and diligently studies current research to determine whether better methods have been devised for teaching grammar.

Jack McDonald, highly intelligent, in his early thirties, is a strong, forceful man who gets along well with other adults. In his college days he was a well-known basketball player and served as an officer in the Navy during the war.

He firmly believes that it is the teacher's job to teach youngsters discipline. He insists that he is in the classroom to tell students what to do and that it is their job to obey. When a student rebels, Jack brings him into line by means of the disciplinary tactics that he knows so well how to employ. He is sure that this approach to teaching pays off in building character because a number of students have come to him after they have left his classes telling him how much they appreciate his making them do what they were supposed to do.

There is much of the drill sergeant in the way Jack conducts his classes. Students file into the room and stand at attention until they are told that they may be seated. Whenever a student wishes to speak, he raises his hand to secure permission and then stands at attention by the side of his seat while he makes his contribution. Students watch Jack carefully to see when it is permissible to laugh or to determine when it is safe to engage in an activity apart from the customary routine. No time is wasted. Each class period is devoted to hard work on the assignment at hand.



Jack is not exceptionally popular with students, but they respect him. No one makes belittling remarks about him, and students greet him carefully in the halls and on the streets after school. Jack wonders from time to time why students do not talk with him about their problems as they do with some of the

other teachers, but he feels that allowing students to become too close to him will be harmful to his teaching effectiveness. He states openly in faculty meetings that "familiarity breeds contempt" and that it is the teacher's responsibility to maintain sufficient distance between himself and the student to insure respect.

Greta Green teaches a primary group. She loves children, but she tries not to show it because she does not want to spoil them. In her opinion, one of her major tasks is to teach children manners. She insists that each child say "Good morning" to her when he arrives at school and shake hands and bid her goodbye as he leaves. She believes she knows the kind of games children should play and enforces her decision at play periods, even though the children, especially the boys, want to play more adult games. Class work is carefully organized and the daily schedule is followed as strictly as possible.

Each pupil knows what is to be done. He is told his responsibilities and Greta repeats them as frequently as necessary.

Pupils may participate in planning. When there are two activities which Greta thinks are equally good, she allows the children to choose the one they prefer.

Jean Allen's life has always been orderly. She is the only child of a mother who stressed neatness and punctuality. Jean has come to value these virtues highly. In her teacher training, she responded immediately to instructors who mentioned the desirability of keeping the window shades even, arranging the seats in straight rows, having all the pupils follow the course of study at the same rate of speed, giving weekly tests to determine what each pupil is doing, and grading on a normal curve. The thought of attempting any variation from a uniform pattern to take care of individual differences frightened her.

Jean teaches all her classes according to the same pattern. The first five minutes are for motivation, the next fifteen for discussion or a predetermined activity, five minutes for an as-

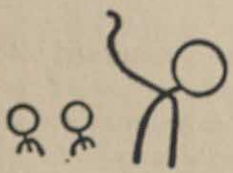
signment, and the remainder of the period for supervised study. Pupils know what will happen and that it is useless to suggest any change. Pupils also know what the assignment will be (the next ten pages in the textbook) and what kind of test to expect (true and false). They know too that no excuses will be accepted for their failure to do the assigned work.

Jean is against change in content or method. Even the adoption of a new textbook alarms her. The facts will be presented in new ways and it will be impossible to predict the questions pupils will ask. Everything will be very confusing and no one will know what is going to happen next.

The administration can always depend upon Jean: reports will be finished on time; the course of study will be followed; pupils will be ready for the system-wide achievement tests; no other teacher will complain about noise or disorder in Jean's classroom; and the children will lead a well-ordered, controlled life.

Jerry Fawcett's clothes are well tailored but slightly extreme. His hair is long and combed straight back. He knows that all the girls think he is handsome and he tries to maintain his reputation as the faculty fashion plate.

Jerry's classes are dramatic. Whenever possible, he stages an entrance, flinging the door wide, entering with a long stride, quoting some passage from the day's lesson or from an appropriate poem.



Jerry believes teaching is acting. If you want to teach effectively you must put on a good show. He doesn't worry about assignments or whether pupils do any work outside the class period. He knows they will learn from watching him and if he is effective enough they will begin to read on their own.

In his opinion, class routine is for the ribbon-clerk type of teacher. Jerry can't be bothered with keeping attendance or any other records. He doesn't believe it is necessary to learn

anything about the pupils, even their names. After all, they are in the class to listen to his interpretations. They can do that whether he knows their names or not. And their success can be determined by how well they do on the final examination. If they have merit, they will have absorbed what he has attempted to impart and will make a high score and a good mark. If they do poorly, they just don't have the ability and shouldn't be in a class which requires a cultured mind.

Jerry is in constant demand for out-of-school appearances, especially at clubs devoted to the arts. With the exception of the coach, he is known by more adults than is any other member of the staff. He is considered a public relations asset by the administration and the outstanding teacher in the system by many parents.

Nat Byrnes wants all the pupils to like science. He has collected many colorful demonstrations which he uses to make every class period a series of exciting incidents. He attends summer schools and conventions to discover new tricks. He is in the height of his glory when he has all his students on the edge of their seats trying to guess what will happen next.

Most students come out of his class thinking that science is amusing and mysterious but without discovering that it has much relation to their home, community, or the way they live. It has little effect on the way they go about solving their problems or on the attitudes they develop.

Nat is sloppy in his dress, his hair is seldom combed, and his shirt collar is almost always soiled. He rushes in and out of his lab without noticing the pupils in the hall or in his class except for the three or four unkempt boys much like himself who hang around after school to try to learn how he staged the demonstration and to tell him of the chemistry set explosion they produced the night before.

Nat avoids becoming involved in any curriculum discussions —they are so futile and unrealistic. Any improvement in the curriculum will come through efforts of individual teachers to

learn better ways of arousing pupil interest. And he has the most interested pupils in school.

Eight-year-olds love Grace Jenkins. She is pretty and gay and wears bright blouses and skirts. She hums and smiles as she works. She loves music and art; consequently, a large part of the day is devoted to singing and art activities. The walls of the classroom are hung with many pictures that the children have painted.

Grace puts high value on creativity and self-expression. The day's program emerges. One thing leads to another. Moods and interests are to be followed. Some days the group does not get around to reading or writing or number work, but that is all right because pupils will learn it faster if it comes spontaneously as a part of some project the class wants to do.

Crises are things to be avoided. Whenever possible, a new idea or a new song is forthcoming when some difficulty arises.

Life is fun in Miss Jenkins' room and the children do not want to leave at the end of the day or the year. Each fall, the nine-year-olds rush back to see Miss Jenkins.

The teacher of the nine-year-olds complains bitterly to the principal that the pupils who have been in Miss Jenkins' room the preceding year are not well disciplined and don't know their arithmetic.

Frank Whittaker is noted for his humor. He is short, with curly hair, and blue eyes that dance with merriment. Life is a lot of fun. He can't be bothered with a lot of educational theory, and faculty meetings are a dreadful bore. His students don't do very well on examinations, but his classes are always crowded. He is a punster, with a joke for every occasion. Class periods are poorly organized, and sometimes it is difficult to decide what was accomplished, but they are never dull. Frank insists that if people are happy, they will learn.

Lloyd Lang spends all his summers taking further work in the field of education. He has developed a great facility in

using educational terminology and is always abreast of the latest innovations. He writes easily and the papers that he prepares for his professional courses are always commended highly because they show such professional spirit and insight into modern methods.

In his classes, Lloyd is very concerned about stimulating creativeness, about building his curriculum around "persistent life situations," and about creating the kind of environment in which the "human interactions are easily assimilable."

Because of his great concern for conducting his class in the most up-to-date manner, Lloyd is afraid to do many of the things that he would like to do. He overlooks the aggressive action of students toward one another and toward himself. He does not interfere when he sees students sitting quietly daydreaming or retreating from group activity. He doesn't try to organize the class, because he is afraid that if he structures the situation too firmly pupil creativeness will be hindered. When the class doesn't seem to be making very much progress, Lloyd is happy in the knowledge that he is creating a situation for good group therapy. If students are unhappy about the lack of organization or because they do not feel they are achieving as they should, Lloyd knows that this is simply a manifestation of the tension that must always occur before insight is achieved. Although the room is always cluttered and students wonder what is going to happen, Lloyd is very quick to tell supervisors and parents that these conditions are part of a permissive atmosphere. Lloyd talks so fast and uses the terminology so well that the supervisors and parents usually become embarrassed and retreat before the barrage of pedagoguese.

Ted Davis thinks of himself as a counselor. He spends a large portion of his time getting to know pupils well, visiting their homes, talking with them about their problems. His manner is easy and relaxed and students have found they can trust him. He doesn't try to tell them what they should do but they seem to decide for themselves as he talks with them.

Much of the work in Ted's room is individual. As individual students set up goals and projects for themselves, Ted finds many occasions for counseling. Many boys and girls who have had difficulty working with other teachers like Ted's procedure and progress rapidly. Other students who have always been rated superior in other classes say they like Mr. Davis but they don't know how they are doing. They can't tell whether they are doing better work than the other pupils.

June Wilson believes that boys and girls learn most from association with their peers. She attempts to create a classroom situation where there are many opportunities to play and work together. She is attractive, but stays in the background as much as possible. She attempts to help the pupils get to know one another, to plan what they need to do, to organize for action, to carry through their plans, and to evaluate their efforts. Her desk is shoved back in the corner and a visitor to her classroom may find her sitting on the floor with a group making puppets. A story is told about the time the superintendent came to visit her class and found her under a work table helping a girl cut out a pattern. The organization of the furniture and the decoration of the room are the outgrowth of pupil work and planning —sometimes to the great concern of the custodian.

Which of these teachers provides an efficient learning situation? Each sincerely believes he is teaching effectively. With one exception, all are considered good teachers by some of their colleagues, students, and parents.

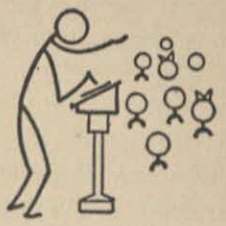
Before we make any judgments about these teachers, there are some fundamental questions we must answer.

What Teaching Procedure Promotes Efficient Learning?

As we begin to work with a class, we are faced with many questions, but the fundamental one has to do with what procedure promotes efficient learning.

Is teaching for efficient learning directing and telling? Do we

start with the assumption that there is a predetermined body of subject matter which we must organize and present, hoping that each youngster will understand our organization and find it helpful? Do we believe that teaching skill consists primarily of organizing knowledge into some pattern, of presenting the facts and generalizations in a clear, easily understood, interesting fashion, of testing to determine the amount of information acquired, and of marking the pupil's attainment?



GIVING INFORMATION

There are many teachers who accept this definition of teaching. They feel that any change from this pattern is a softening of the educative process, a departure from the fundamentals. They are concerned with better ways of telling, explaining, drilling, testing, and marking.

Is teaching for efficient learning helping pupils to do what they want? Do we start with pupil interests and follow them wherever they may lead? Is it our function to discover what pupils like to do, to collect materials for them to use, to help them decide upon more effective ways of doing what they want to do, to encourage growth, and to accept the achievement that results? Do we start with the assumption that it does not matter what a pupil studies as long as it seems interesting and desirable to him? Do we feel that pupils should be free to change from one project to another as they choose? Do we accept all types of pupil behavior?

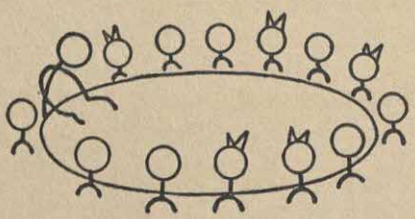
DIRECTING

Some teachers believe that they make their contribution by assisting the child to execute his ideas. They do not want to crush his initiative, stifle his creativeness, or cause emotional frustrations. They believe the child will develop satisfactorily if he has the opportunity to do the things that seem important to him with the understanding and support of an adult to

whom he can turn if he needs help or counseling. These teachers are concerned with better ways of studying the child, of encouraging him, of recording his growth, and of counseling with his parents.

Is teaching for efficient learning working with boys and girls as a member of the classroom group? Do we start with the assumption that the most important outcome of formal education in a democracy is the ability to be self-directing, which involves having a set of values and the social skills necessary to implement them? Do we believe we should live with pupils in such a way that they experience democratic procedures and come to value them? Do we see ourselves as having the authority to plan and direct the work of pupils, yet sharing with them the decisions they are willing to accept? Do we believe we should insist that every member of the group abide by the agreements reached?

The teachers who take this position place their major emphasis on working with boys and girls in such a way that increasing responsibility for self-direction rests with the pupils. They constantly stress the why, the what, and the how. Why are we proposing this? What are the values we seek? How shall we do it? What will be the consequences for ourselves and



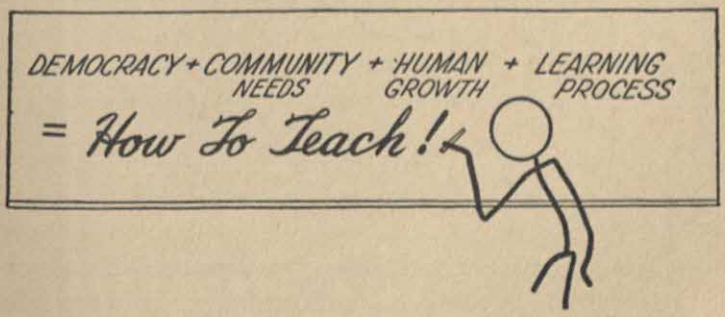
WORKING WITH

others? How can we improve? They stress group work because they believe that values, skills, and security emerge from interaction with others. These teachers are concerned with helping pupils understand and accept themselves and others, with aiding them to plan, work, and evaluate together, and to use the

scientific method, with assisting them to analyze their values, experiences, and procedures, and with working with parents and lay public in such a way that they become an integral part of the working unit.

Are we experts to give youngsters the answers to the questions, or are we in a classroom to help students find answers for themselves? Are we primarily concerned with supplying students with information, or are we concerned with helping them develop work skills? Is it our job to establish the tasks for boys and girls and then to see to it that they carry out the tasks, or is it our job to serve as a resource person who is there to help boys and girls examine an area that is important in our society? Is it our job to listen and help boys and girls hear each other and help them interpret the society around them, or is it our job to interpret our society and to transmit our culture from one generation to another?

We can't answer these questions intelligently unless we know how people learn and the type of society in which they live. If we teach in a manner that conflicts with the way people learn most easily, our teaching is inefficient. If we emphasize values and skills that are contrary to the goals of the society in which the school exists, our teaching is inefficient. Let's examine briefly what we know about learning and our social goals.



What Do We Know About Learning?

How we learn has long been a concern of man. Philosophers have advanced theories of learning. Psychologists have con-

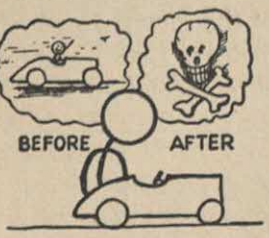
ducted experiments to test the hypotheses of philosophers and their own. Scientists in fields ranging from physics and biology to psychiatry have contributed research which adds to our knowledge of the learning process.

On the basis of existing evidence, the following conclusions about how we learn seem justified:

What Is Learning?

We live, and through the process of living we learn. Each of us, as he lives, selects from his environment the things with which he will interact. Some of the things will be words of other people; some will be the behavior of other people; some will be physical features of the environment. As we interact with the features of the environment which we select, we change. *The process of change in a person through interaction is learning.*

We interact with factors in our environment, rather than react to them. *We sense, interpret, and project future actions and discover that both the environmental factor and ourselves are changed in the process.* Any object with which we have an experience is changed for us. For example, we narrowly escape death in an automobile accident. Not only the car in which we were riding but all other cars are different for us. We see any car as a possible death weapon as well as a means of speedy transportation.



Learning is a process of perceiving and integrating.

What Do We Perceive?

Perception involves selection and interpretation. We select the factors in the environment with which we will interact in terms of our previous experience and our present purposes. As we enter a room, we are seeking a place to sit. We know that facing the light has given us a headache in the past. We note

the window and the arrangement of the furniture and seek a chair where we do not face the light. After determining the general location we desire, we examine the chairs more closely to see which will be more comfortable. We interpret, in terms of our past experience with various shapes and textures of chairs. As we move toward the chair which we believe will be best, we note a picture hanging on the wall. It is a Van Gogh, in whose works we have a keen interest. To observe the picture from the chair we have selected as most comfortable will be difficult and we revise our plans and change our action to secure a chair where we can see the Van Gogh better. Another person entering the same room, desiring to sit by his friend, would have selected different factors in the room with which to interact.

We interpret a factor in the environment—an object, sound, color, taste, odor, and so forth—*in terms of our previous experience with it or something like it.* If the object with which we are interacting is the telephone, we may notice it is black, especially if we have seen some telephones with red or white plastic covers. We may see it is a cradle phone if we are old enough to remember the box type that hung on the wall. We may observe that it has a dial if other telephones we use do not have them. We may see the worn cord if we are an electrician. We may note the design if we are an art student. What we perceive as our gaze falls on the telephone is determined in part by our previous experience.

And we interpret in terms of what we want to do. If we are clearing the desk to get more work space, the telephone is an object to move. If we want to find the railway fare to a nearby city, the telephone is a quick way of contacting the railway station. If we are expecting a call from a friend, we listen for the ringing of the bell in the telephone and may begin to plan what we are going to say.

If we have a series of unsatisfactory experiences in attempting to share our ideas via the telephone, our concept of the telephone may change. Instead of viewing the black instrument

as a convenient way of talking with our associates, we may begin to perceive it as an object to be avoided and used only when other possibilities have been exhausted.

How Do We Integrate Our Perceptions?

Learning occurs through our interaction with the features of the environment which we select and interpret in terms of our past experiences and present purposes. Through the interaction we are changed. Meanings are revised. We are not the same because our knowledge of ourselves, our interpretation of our surroundings, and our purposes are changed by our experience. The new has become a part of the old and both have been revised. We call this phase of the learning process integration. It is the establishment of new relationships among the knowledges, values, and skills we have and between us and the factors of our environment.

Seeing a relationship changes us and our world. A nine-year-old on the way home from a movie in which one of the characters had become a habitual drunkard asked himself and his family, "Could that happen to me?" For the first time in his life he understood that the things he did now would affect him in the distant future. Out of that insight came a concept of himself which changed every fact he knew about himself and a basic belief which will condition each new experience he encounters, helping to determine what he will select or ignore, use or reject.

> A five-year-old visited an Indian pueblo with his father. As they climbed from the car a crowd of Indian boys and girls rushed out to greet them, saying, "Take my picture?" As soon as the father had taken the picture, the Indian youngsters rushed the pair, shouting, "Gimme a nickel, gimme a nickel. You took our pictures, gimme a nickel." The onrush was so great that the five-year-old beat a hasty retreat to the car, deciding that perhaps Indians weren't very desirable playmates.

But that conclusion was a revision of his previous learning. He had already known about Indians. He had talked about them.

He had seen Indians in the movies and on television shows. He had loved Indian stories and wanted to live with Indians. But this new experience supplied him with additional data and caused him to revise his previous beliefs. And future experiences will undoubtedly lead him to further revisions. That's how the process goes. New facts and new experiences lead to a readjustment of previously held opinions and attitudes. And that revision constitutes learning.

The learning of a complex skill illustrates integration too. We start with very simple types of coordination and then move on to more complex types. A boy doesn't learn how to dribble a basketball without previous experience. He has already learned how to walk, how to run, how to move his arm back and forth at the elbow, how to control the pressure exerted by his finger tips. The process of learning to dribble is the reorganization of these skills into a new skill.

Learning involves going out on the frontier. It means breaking through the shell of the present world into a new world. As we acquire a new idea that gives us a new concept of ourselves or of our place in the society around us or of the organization of society, we find ourselves in a new orientation to everything. We face a world that for the moment is somewhat chaotic. Things and ideas are not in their accustomed places. We are faced with the proposition of reorganizing our world of knowledge and belief as a result of the new knowledge that has come to us. Thus, disorganization is a stage in learning. It is the entrance to a new organization of knowledge. As a new idea becomes meaningful to us, it is necessary for us to rearrange the ideas and beliefs that we hold to include this new idea.

Learning is done by the individual; it can't be done for him. Other people may share with us the results of their experience and we may incorporate some of this knowledge into our own experience through our interpretations of what they have said, but no one can make us accept or be sure we understand what they have said to us.

When Do We Learn?

Learning occurs in the present. It is not something that can be put off; it is not something that happens at some other time; it is going on at the given moment and the present learning will affect future learnings.

Learning is going on all the time. It is not something that occurs only within the classroom. We learn through our interaction with the stimuli which come our way. If a child wants to learn to play baseball and his parents or his teacher try to stop him, the child learns certain things in that process. His proposed learning may be halted momentarily, but he is acquiring new, unplanned understanding. In this case he may be learning to hate authority or that adults don't understand people his age, but learning of some type is occurring. Learning can't be stopped.

Learnings are multiple. We don't learn one thing at a time. We may be in a room where we are attempting to learn American history, but we may learn that certain types of seats are uncomfortable, that small print makes our eyes ache, that Susie Smith likes Johnny Jones better than she does us.

The product of the experience may be "good" or "bad," depending upon the point of view of the person making judgments about it. We may look at a fact or an attitude that a student has acquired in the classroom and say that it is bad. The student may look at it and feel that it is the most important thing that he learned during the day.

What Conditions Affect Learning?

If we are attempting to promote certain outcomes or types of growth in others through an experience, we should know

that the efficiency of the learning is conditioned by several factors in the situation: the learner's purposes, emotions, and physical condition.

We learn what we propose to learn. Other people may tell us what we are supposed to learn and may try to create a situation in which we will learn what they want us to learn, but we select from any environment and from any situation the things that are important to us. We select in terms of what our past experiences have enabled us to understand and what we want to do or what we want to become. A boy enthusiastic about hunting may look at a film of a battle of the American Revolution and may learn about the types of guns the soldiers carried. A girl looking at the same picture may, because of her concern about clothing, learn how colonial women dressed. Each pupil selects from the experiences provided by the school the learning that is in line with his purposes.

We also learn much that we don't plan to learn. As we attempt to execute one of our purposes, we try to select from the resources available to us those facts and those knowledges which will enable us to do what we want to do. In the process, however, our actions bring us into contact with other facts and with other emotions which color and add to the facts that we want to acquire. We learn through these additional interactions whether we wish to do so or not.

The emotional qualities of the learning situation are learned too and continue to be associated with facts, skills, and other learnings which emerge from an experience. We minimize certain facts and we emphasize others out of proportion because of the emotional orientation. We utilize certain learnings and skills and avoid others because of the emotions associated with them.

Emotions condition the learning. The greater the emotional content of the experience, the deeper the interaction and more definite the learning. Pleasant and satisfying emotions enrich and make the learning that the teacher hopes will occur easy and efficient. Anger and rebellious emotions interfere with the learning the teacher desires. The acquisition of facts in an un-

pleasant emotional environment develops an aversion to further contact with similar experiences. Pleasant emotions lead to the desire for more experiences of a similar nature. *Emotions in the situation in which the learning occurs affect the use made of the knowledge, understanding, and skills that result from the experience.*

Learning is affected by the physical condition of the learner. A person who is tired does not learn as quickly or as well as one who is refreshed. Also, lack of physical maturity may decrease the efficiency of the learning. As the physical structure develops, the human organism is able to interact with its environment in new ways, and new learnings emerge. In some cases, the learnings can be made to occur before the physical make-up is completely ready for them, but the learning process is less efficient because physical inadequacy prevents the human organism from interacting fully. In forced learning of this type, the physical structure may be injured. For example, insisting that a six-year-old begin to read before his eyes are sufficiently mature may impair his eyesight.

Some individuals learn more and faster than others. They have more skill in perceiving and in integrating what they perceive. Through their previous experiences they have become more able to see and more able to understand what they are seeing. The extent to which this skill of perceiving has been developed determines how much a person can get from the new experience he is having. Equally important is the skill of integrating the new experience with learnings from previous experience. As mentioned earlier, this process of integration is something the individual learner has to do for himself, and the youngster who sees relationships more easily and more quickly learns more from his experience.

What Is the Function of Thinking?

We can increase our learning through a procedure we call thinking—a process by which we ascertain and test relationships by mental manipulation of abstract symbols such as

words or concepts. Learning does occur without thinking, but thinking is the key to efficient learning and increased understanding.

Thinking is a skill which may be developed and refined. Throughout the centuries mankind has evolved techniques of thinking which can be shared with those who wish to learn them. Becoming skilled in the use of these techniques is essential if we hope to continue to increase our knowledge and improve our ways of living together.

What Does Our Knowledge of the Learning Process Imply for Teaching?

From the information we have about the learning process, it is evident that *telling may not be teaching.* The learner selects from his environment the factors with which he will interact. Although we may compel a pupil to sit quietly while we talk to him, we cannot make him learn. He may be interacting with the bird singing outside, the color of the girl's hair in the seat in front of him, or the picture on the bulletin board, and not hear a word we say. If he chooses to interact with our words, we may be able to explain what he wants to know. Lecturing is only one phase of teaching—explaining—and it is effective only if the pupil is seeking to learn what we are trying to tell him.

When boys and girls want to learn the things we hope they will learn, the situation is easy. The skills of explaining and illustrating are rather simple. *The difficult task in teaching comes in helping boys and girls who don't know what they want to learn, to establish clear purposes, and in helping pupils who have undesirable social purposes to re-examine those purposes and begin to want to learn the things that will make them effective citizens in our society.*

Since we can't make boys and girls learn what we want them to learn, we can only create the type of environment in which learning of the kind that we seek is possible. It is our job to set the scene, to create the situations out of which boys and girls

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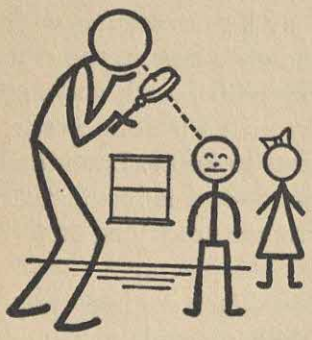
can have the experience through which they can develop the desirable characteristics that society seeks.

Since all pupils do not interact with the same stimuli, it is necessary for us to attempt to create an environment with many stimuli, if we expect all pupils to learn. We cannot add only one or two new features to the classroom and expect to motivate thirty pupils with different purposes and backgrounds. As we come to know our pupils well enough to understand their motivations, however, we can be more effective with fewer stimuli because we can use those with which we know the students are likely to interact.

Our knowledge that learning is an individual matter, that different pupils interact with different stimuli, that the facts that are important to one person may not seem so to another, makes individual planning and evaluation a necessity. If we want to teach for efficient learning, *we study each pupil, help him plan his work, and judge his achievement in terms of his purposes.*



We help the individual analyze himself not only in terms of his planning but on the basis of the outcomes of his experiences. Each person integrates new learnings with previous ones. To further this process, *we provide opportunities for the students to examine the experiences they have had and to evaluate the results.* When a person makes an analysis of an experience that he has had, the process increases the possibility of his generalizing from the experience in such a way that he can use the results to be more effective in new situations.

A high-school sophomore came to his father complaining that his teacher was not doing a good job. Nothing was being accomplished in the class. The father asked the boy what *he* had done to improve the situation, what responsibility he had as-

sumed. The sixteen-year-old said, "None. I can't tell Mr. Brown what to do. The rest of the class wouldn't like it." Out of the discussion, in which the father played the role of teacher or counselor, the boy drew the generalization that he had a responsibility for the success of any class of which he was a member. And he learned some specific techniques, which would not harm his own relationships with his friends, for helping the teacher improve the situation.

The teacher in the case cited was not making progress in the direction of purposes accepted by the students. When we realize that pupils learn in terms of their purposes, *we attempt to get pupils to assist in the formulation of the purposes we seek in a class.* Unless we bring pupils into the establishment of purposes, the learning situation may be inefficient or even futile because pupils may have different, perhaps even conflicting, purposes.

Since learning is an active process, *we need to organize our classes so that pupils can do things.* Doing can be making something with the hands, surveying the eating habits in the cafeteria, solving a problem, or writing a poem. The essential feature is that the pupil is doing something for himself, something that he considers important enough to keep on doing.

Failure to understand that learning occurs through action is illustrated by the comment of a teacher who visited a class where pupils were at work.

> In one corner a committee was listening critically to devotions being prepared for an assembly. Another group was practicing a skit to be put on over the PA system. A radio drama showing our war orphan project was being written by the radio committee. Using reference books and the make-up kit, the art of changing a child into an elderly person was being learned and practiced by the "stage crew." Another group was darting in and out with evaluation blanks. "I think," our visitor commented, "this is all very fine, but when do you get time to teach?"

Pupils are not actively engaged in the class procedures when they are daydreaming, when they are seeking ways to stop, when they work only when we look at them.

We make every effort to create a pleasant emotional climate in our classroom if we hope for efficient learning in which pupils have purposes that coincide with ours. If we create a situation in which pupils are under emotional tension, their attention will be focused on resolving the tension rather than on the ends we hope they will have in mind. For example, in many situations in which a strong emphasis is placed on marks, pupils are more concerned with obtaining a high score than upon developing skill and competency in the field.

We recognize that attitudes and beliefs are influenced by the emotional content of an environment. If we hope to build positive attitudes toward the learnings we seek to develop, we work for a classroom that is pleasant and enjoyable.

As we work with a pupil, we recognize that in addition to the learnings that we hope he will acquire, many other learnings may emerge from his relationships with other students, with the pictures in his books, with the ball game that is scheduled for the evening. All these factors enter into the situation and influence the outcomes of regular class activities. We are just beginning to recognize how important surroundings are. Safety posters in the school gymnasium, the social groupings in the classes, nutrition cartoons over the cafeteria line, the dissatisfaction of the teacher with his personal life, pictures in the hallway—all contribute to the multiple learnings that occur as boys and girls live in the school.

Of one thing we can be certain. Every pupil in our class is learning. There are no non-learners. That term is a name that we give to a person who does not acquire from the experiences with us the types of knowledges, skills, and attitudes that we hope he will. *Teaching is not a process of causing learning—learning is occurring all the time.*

Teaching for efficient learning is helping boys and girls decide what are the important things to learn and planning with

them the experiences through which it is hoped the learnings will occur. The emphasis is on ways of helping pupils establish worth-while purposes rather than on techniques of forcing pupils to work on unpleasant tasks. If we attempt to force a pupil to learn, his learnings are likely to be different from those we anticipated. He learns how to avoid us, how to fool us, how to combat us. He learns to dislike us or the experience. And—perhaps—he learns a little of the knowledge we hope he will acquire. But it may be in an emotional matrix which will lead him to use it in an undesirable way.

What Social Factors Determine the Efficiency of the Learning Situation?

We are teaching in a democracy and our schools have been established to produce democratic citizens. A major criterion in judging our teaching is whether or not it promotes the values and skills essential to effective participation in a democratic society. *Teaching for efficient learning is teaching that results in democratic values and skills.*

If we want to aid pupils to develop democratic values and skills, we are faced with the task of clarifying for ourselves the meaning of democracy and identifying the values and skills we will seek to promote—even though we recognize that through our living with pupils our insights will deepen and we will revise our statements of desired values and competencies.

What is a democratic society and what are the values and skills that enable a person to be an effective member of it?

Democracy is a social goal, a symbol of perfection toward which we are striving. Underlying it are two basic concepts:

> That man is intelligent enough, or capable of becoming intelligent enough through education, to make decisions that will promote his own welfare;
>
> *and*
>
> That personality is the center of value, and that all social organizations derive their significance from their promise to

enhance the individual, to guarantee the sacredness of his person, to safeguard his rights, and to extend his opportunities.

What type of social organization permits these concepts to be translated into reality? Although there is disagreement on specific political, social, and economic structure, most students of democracy agree that the following are essential:

(1) It must provide for the uncoerced participation of all members in the formation of policy that will affect them.
(2) It must provide for the free flow of information among the members.
(3) It must accommodate points of view that diverge from that of the majority.
(4) It must be sufficiently flexible to permit any change deemed desirable by the members, except change that would prevent further change.

Within this framework the specific social goals will change. As teachers in a democracy, we have the responsibility of helping pupils develop a commitment to these basic values and skill in intelligently solving the problems that arise.

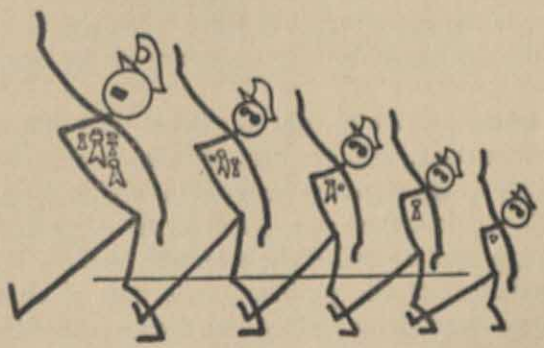
The value that democratic society places on the individual demands one task of every teacher—leading each pupil to a deeper appreciation of the worth of each person in the class, the school, the nation, and the world. The way of living in the class furthers democracy as it increases the extent to which pupils accept each other, become concerned about each other, and value the unique contribution that each can make.

The essence of democracy is that values are acquired—not imposed. To force acceptance of values is to contradict and refute the end sought. To help pupils develop an allegiance to democratic values requires that the teacher live them himself and thus promote an atmosphere in which democracy is experienced. But experiencing is not enough. The teacher's responsibility for developing democratic values extends to analyzing with pupils the way they live together and assisting them to

verbalize the qualities of the experience which they value. Recognizing and stating are steps in clarifying and developing allegiance to values. Having an opportunity to extend these values in the living together increases the allegiance still further.

Self-directing citizens are essential if democracy is to continue to flourish. Democratic forms and procedures require that men and women reach their own decisions and assume the responsibilities inherent in their choices. If the citizens do not exercise their right to participate in policy formation, freedom is lost by default. Unless a high percentage of the population cherish and utilize the privilege and responsibility of self-direction, a few members will make the choices and will impose their authority. *Teaching promotes democracy as it aids students to become more self-directing through careful analysis of beliefs held, through participation in class planning and evaluation, and through taking action which implements the decisions made.*

Blind obedience is characteristic of citizens in a dictatorship. In a democracy, where everyone is expected to participate in making decisions concerning public welfare, each person must



be conscious of the purpose for which the group is striving and must be capable of making individual and group decisions that will promote that purpose.

Living in a democracy is group living, and effective participation involves group skills. Groups are also faced with solving problems, and the individual assists or hinders the group in solving common problems. Teachers have the responsibility of helping the individual learn such skills of group participation as communication, stating a problem, forming and operating groups to collect and analyze data, sharing information, helping the group reach a decision and organize to execute it. Committee work, group planning, group action, and group evaluation are basic democratic skills.

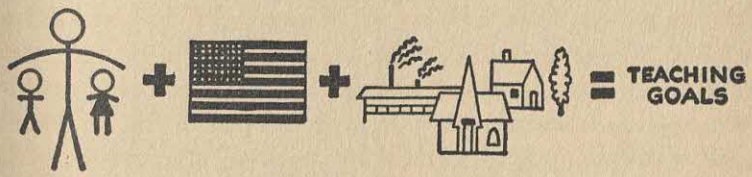
Closely allied with self-direction is self-control. In a democracy, control that comes from within is sought. Imposition from without is avoided where possible. No attempt is made to proctor the activities of each individual. Instead, effort is made to have each individual develop a commitment to democratic ideals strong enough to guide his behavior. To promote self-control, teachers in a democratic school are faced with the necessity of developing an allegiance to democratic values and the skills essential to solving the problems involved in realizing them in our society.

Self-direction and self-control are not attained by carrying out the directions and plans of others. They are cultivated by giving pupils the opportunity to solve, with the teacher's assistance, the decisions that are necessary in the operation of the class.

All decisions are not equally intelligent. We help the individual further the development of his own potential and that of the society as we help him increase his ability to make wise choices. Throughout the years, scientists have evolved a problem-solving procedure called the scientific method. It involves careful definition of the problem, collection of all the facts available, making judgments based on the facts, and testing the conclusions. Teachers contribute to more effective democratic living as they aid pupils to isolate the issue, to withhold judgment until the evidence is collected from all sides, and to base decisions on facts rather than on whim or prejudice.

What Conclusion Can We Draw?

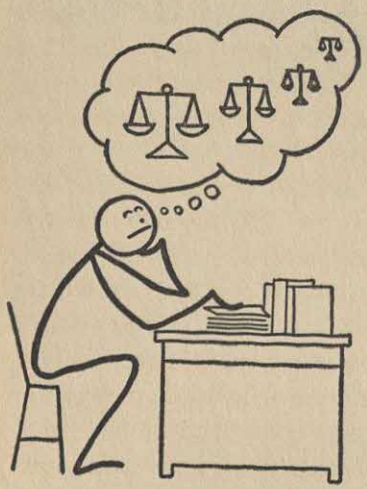
In terms of the preceding analysis we conclude that the efficient teaching-learning situation is one in which the emotional climate fosters venturing, the purposes of pupils and teacher are harmonious, and the values the pupil experiences in the classroom coincide with the goals of the society maintaining the school. The following chapter is an attempt to define the role of the teacher who accepts this interpretation of an efficient teaching-learning situation.



Chapter 2

What Is the Role of the Teacher?

In actual practice, teaching method consists of judging each teaching situation—and there may be a thousand or more a day—and choosing at the moment the procedure that we deem most likely to be successful. We are able to make the decisions intelligently and with assurance if we have thought through our philosophy of teaching and have decided upon the functions we should perform.



What Are the Essential Functions of the Teacher?

If we believe that an efficient teaching-learning situation is one in which the emotional climate fosters venturing, the purposes of pupils and teachers are harmonious, and the values the pupil experiences in the classroom coincide with the goals of the society maintaining the school, we seek to develop:

(1) a class in which each pupil feels accepted, at ease, successful, and responsible for helping others;
(2) a class in which pupil leadership may emerge, morale is high, the feeling of group unity is strong, and pupils grow in self-control;

(3) a class in which individuals and groups increase their skill in collecting and recording evidence of growth, making judgments, and revising plans;

(4) a class in which the individual grows in understanding of himself and more adequately selects from the environment the experiences and resources which he may use to further his purposes.

How Does the Community Affect Our Function?

The emotional and mental climate of the community plays an important part in determining the teacher's role. Children are educated by the community, of which the school is but a part. They acquire the social, political, economic, and moral attitudes and values of the community through all the experiences they have with the various social institutions, agencies, and groups which function there. The school, and any classroom, is a part of the total environment and is conditioned thereby.

The attitude of the community toward freedom of inquiry acts as a determinant in choosing our way of working with boys and girls. If the community, or an influential portion of its citizens, seeks to restrict the areas of study and the sources of information, careful examination of issues and beliefs will be hampered. If the community is proud of its tradition of intellectual integrity and open-mindedness, we will be challenged to exercise all our resources in helping pupils study our culture and its complex or conflicting values, and in developing allegiance to those values held in common.

A community may be more or less advanced in its conception of teaching than we are. We may find that parents in a community in which we teach are more concerned about pupils' emotional development than we are. We may discover that members of the community have greater insight into the ways in which boys and girls can be brought into active community participation than we have. We may learn that pupils are far beyond us in skill in cooperative planning. As we work and

think with community members, including pupils, our concept of teaching methods may change. Even though we have studied teaching procedures, our insight into human growth and development, motivation, and group operation may grow through planning with parents and pupils.

If we diverge too far from the expectations of the community, we may find ourselves ostracized and our relationship with our pupils jeopardized. Certainly one of our first steps is to find out what the community believes to be good teaching and what the community hopes its boys and girls will achieve from their relationship and experience with us.

The level of communication in the community is also a part of the intellectual climate. If the oral communication skills are not highly developed, we will find the pupils less articulate and more at home working with their hands. In certain rural areas, much of the work of alert English teachers is in oral English. Since the children have been told that they should be seen and not heard, it takes the teachers months of effort to encourage them enough to get them to make a talk before the class. However, English teachers in nearby communities, where children talk, discuss, and sing as a part of their home and community environment, can put much less emphasis on this type of communication. Method, as well as subject matter, is formulated in terms of the skills and needs of our community.

The possibility of our teaching in a manner that promotes efficient learning will be enhanced or limited by the community. Community expectations, school-community relations, and the resources of the community, as well as the mental and emotional climate of the community, are all factors which condition our teaching.

The way the community believes teaching should be done will affect our choice of method. If our predecessors and colleagues have spent a major portion of their class time in having pupils drill and memorize, we may face serious questions if we do not do the same. If no teachers have taken field trips or studied the community, our first attempts may be misunder-

stood. If the community believes good discipline means keeping the class quiet, an effort to move toward pupil self-discipline may be interpreted as lack of skill in controlling pupils. If teachers have been assigning the same homework to all pupils and homework in our class consists of individual projects, parents may protest. We cannot move too far beyond community expectations concerning teaching methods unless we invite the parents to think with us about the ways we can be most helpful to their children. This does not mean that we cannot move in the direction of what we believe constitutes good teaching if our concept differs from that of the community. It does mean that if we desire to change the procedure being followed in the average classroom in the community, we shall have to bring parents in on the planning. We shall want the parents to come together with us to discuss the kind of experiences they hope their children will have in school and the kind of growth they hope will be achieved. This talking together will lead to an agreement that will make it possible for us to move in the direction of better teaching procedures.

The reputation of the school in the community will affect our work. If the community has a high regard for the school and its teachers, few questions will arise concerning our teaching procedures. But if the community has lost confidence in the school personnel, any change will be subject to suspicion and quick criticism. We will be much freer to experiment and more able to teach by the best procedure that we know if our school has won the support and trust of the community. If the teachers have shown themselves to be conscientious, worth-while, mature citizens, and if the parents and lay personnel of the community accept them as such, we will not have to hesitate about making needed innovations. But if the community, rightly or wrongly, is suspicious of teachers and resentful of the school program, we must be careful to insure that pupils and parents thoroughly understand and approve all the changes recommended. Much more of our time must be spent in building rapport with pupils and in planning with parents.

If certain groups in the community are seeking to control the school, our method of teaching will be subjected to close scrutiny. Any marked deviation from standard practice or procedures will provide the basis for criticism. Under such conditions thoroughness in our planning with pupils and parents, and also in our record-keeping, is necessary. Support for the method used in our class is built upon parent and pupil understanding, which comes only through joint planning and the evidence of growth exhibited in our records.

The relationships between adults and young people in the community have significance for us too. If the children are accustomed to strict, authoritarian control at home, too great a deviation in the classroom may not be understood. If children are allowed an unusual amount of freedom in their homes and other community institutions, a highly restrictive classroom control will be resented and may cause rebellion. Once again the community mores must enter our decision.

The ability and willingness of the community to support the schools affect our teaching. If the average class size is twenty-five, we are in a much better position to individualize instruction than if it is forty-five. When classrooms are small and crowded, or when teaching supplies are limited to a textbook, our possible choices of procedures are restricted.

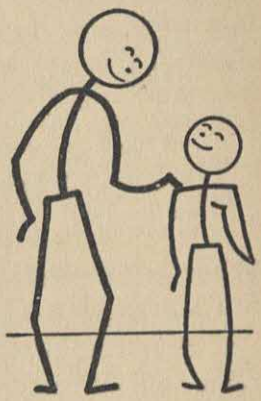
In light of the contribution of the local community to the learning of children and the part it plays in determining the extent to which we can promote efficient learning in the classroom, the teacher has a fifth function to perform. He should help his class develop:

(5) an understanding of the importance of cooperation and skill in working with persons outside the class group.

What Is Our Role in Improving Human Relations?

Learning means venturing out into new areas. And we venture farther from our old knowledges and prejudices in a situation in which we know that we will not be hurt too much. To

use the common expression, "None of us like to stick our necks out too far." But we are freer to test our ideas and try new ones if we are among friends. If we want to create an efficient learning situation in which boys and girls feel free to dare to try new things, we develop a situation in which students feel they are among friends. We seek to improve the human relations in the class.



If we hope to create good human relations for pupils, we strive to be more secure within ourselves. We attempt to overcome the worries and the concerns of our out-of-school living, to develop positive relationships with our supervisor, principal, and superintendent, to remain calm when confronted with new developments that occur in the school and in the classroom. We try to become a person to whom pupils will turn for help—a person who does not become jittery in the face of difficult circumstances, a person who does not release his frustration, spites, and emotional difficulties by aggression against pupils.

A second step in promoting good human relations is to make special effort to help each pupil feel that he belongs, that he is accepted by other members of the class. In this respect, our role is assisting pupils to know one another, to understand one another, and to become more concerned about helping one another.

We want each pupil to feel at ease and successful in our group. Our task is to create a situation in which pupils can focus their major attention and effort on self-improvement rather than on how to become accepted by their peers.

We have the further responsibility of encouraging pupils to accept and help one another. Through their work with us, pupils should learn that their individual welfare is dependent upon the success of the group.

To accomplish these goals, we constantly seek better answers to the following questions:

How can I work with boys and girls so that they will trust me and like me?

How can I work with boys and girls so that they will like to work in the group in which I am working?

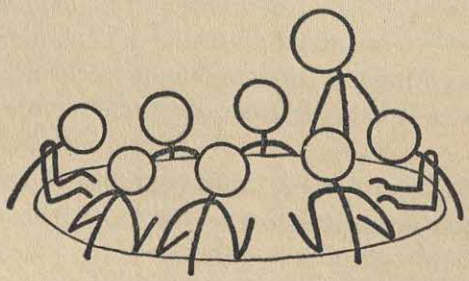
How can I work with boys and girls so that they will accept and like one another?

How can I help boys and girls to increase their desire to help one another?

What Is Our Role in the Class Group?

As we begin to work with a group, we have a choice as to the type of leadership we will exert. We may choose to be authoritarian and attempt to make the group do our bidding. We may choose to serve the group and permit the students to develop any structure they wish. Or we may believe that we should work within the group and seek to become a working member of it.

If we want to create the emotional climate in which the most efficient learning will occur, existing research indicates that we will select the role of working within the group.



A basic aspect of becoming a part of the group is to continue to regard ourselves as learners. We are, in fact, learners. We don't know all the answers; through each new experience we learn more of them. And we learn them along with the

members of our class. If we let pupils know that we see ourselves in this light, they feel freer to share with us their feelings and their reactions to the experiences that they are having.

As a member of the group we have the same problems of getting along with other people that any other member has. In fact, our task of securing acceptance is more difficult because of our special status in the situation.

We can never completely get away from this special role, because we are the teacher and we do have legal responsibility for the program in the class. We have responsibility for planning, for guiding activities, for selecting materials, for evaluating progress, and for organizing and controlling the group.

But we can share these decisions, and in the sharing we can become an active part of the group. Sharing decisions is the technique through which we increase the efficiency of the learning situation because it enables us to utilize the intelligence of all and to secure their acceptance of responsibility for the success of the activities attempted.

The type of decisions that are made together will be determined by the maturity of the class. Our emphasis, however, is on constantly increasing the area in which decisions are shared.

As the person responsible to the board of education and the school administration, we have the final decision, but our effectiveness in teaching democratic values and skills will be measured by our ability to make decisions democratically with the other members of the group. Many times it will mean going along with the group even when we think a decision is wrong, assuming, of course, that the consequences will not be too detrimental to any member of the group. Fear of a wrong decision is unnecessary, because we know that many times pupils learn as much or more from making mistakes as from making the right decision.

Although we have responsibility for assuming control of the class if decisions detrimental to some members of the class are made, our procedure can be to use the problems engendered by the decisions as the basis for further thinking together.

Our task is to provide enough direction to give the pupils a sense of security, but not enough to discourage initiative. There will be times when students will hesitate and feel lost, when they do not have a sense of direction as a group. At such times we will need to step in and suggest to the group solutions that will get them over the hurdle. When the class wants to relapse into less responsibility than they have grown to accept, we will need to help them accept that feeling in themselves. We will assume the job of helping the group move ahead during the time they feel this desire for dependence. And then we will retire from directing the group as the initiative once again starts to surge forward among members of the class.

In all planning and working with students, we can be flexible in deciding upon the projects and activities. We watch for ways to accomplish our purposes while students work on theirs. This is not being deceitful. It is not being dishonest with youngsters on the matter of teacher-pupil planning. It is a simple recognition that there are certain types of socially desirable growth that we want to see occur. We cannot get these types of growth by attempting to force youngsters to work on special activities which we think will move them in the direction of such behavior. We recognize that such behavior and such types of growth may be achieved through many types of activities. Therefore, we are free to plan with youngsters the types of activities which to them seem important and in the process of executing them we watch for the opportunities, the moments when our help is desired, when we can help them develop the particular skills, attitudes, and understandings that we feel are important for citizens in a democracy.

To teach for efficient learning in a democracy requires that we have faith in the pupils' ability to think and plan. Unless we have faith in students we can't provide the type of leadership necessary to help them grow and develop in self-direction. We shall continually direct them, and in the process we shall deprive them of the chance to mature.

Participation in planning is one of the most important experi-

ences pupils can have. It gives them an understanding of the purpose of the work; it gives them a chance to see that their purposes are seriously considered; and it increases their skill in planning their own daily life. Skill in self-direction comes as a result of having the opportunity to plan.

In determining our procedures, we recognize that we don't educate pupils. Experiences educate. We can only help youngsters plan for and provide the situations and conditions out of which experiences are possible. We realize further that the planning out of which projects arise constitutes experience, perhaps the most important type of experience that pupils have.

We have responsibility for seeing that the class lives up to its decisions. In this sense we play the role of the group conscience. If the teaching is effective, the extent to which we must play this role will decrease as the class lives together. If we perform our function well, we help the group gain sufficient self-direction so that other members will start serving as class conscience and insist that the group carry out its plans. We have, as a member of the group, just as great a responsibility for living up to the decisions as does any other member. When we violate a decision reached by the class we make it clear that we have never been a part of the group and that we have never respected its planning and decisions. We have been manipulating the pupils all the way along without any real participation as a group member.

We also have a responsibility for helping students carry out the decisions that they reach. They may not be sure of the techniques for organizing to carry out the activities that they undertake. We serve as a resource person to help them find better ways of making plans and carrying them out.

As resource person, we contribute information about books, references, motion pictures, and other learning materials. We are glad to help pupils locate materials to carry on a group project or to further individual study. We know other people outside the classroom who can help, and we serve as a liaison between the class and administration, or between the group

and members of the community. Pupils use our skill and our leadership when they are in need of advice or direction to further their ends.

In this role we are just another problem-solver, with greater skill in problem-solving than the other persons with whom we are working. We have greater skill in deciding what we know and what we don't know, and in learning what we don't know. In addition, we know a few facts that the students with whom we work have not encountered. These skills and these facts constitute the tools that make it possible for us to help the students gain more from the experiences that they have with us.

Since we are more skilled in problem-solving, it is our role to help boys and girls decide what is important for them to know, to help them plan how they will go about the study of the problems that they believe are important, to assist them in the collection of data and the drawing of generalizations, to aid them in applying conclusions, and to help them evaluate their performance and devise ways of improving it in the future.

Sincere acceptance of this role means that we become a listener, a helper, a resource person, a stage-setter, a spotlight-shifter, an explainer, a questioner.

Our function is to help pupils become increasingly able to analyze themselves and the situation in which they find themselves, to formulate courses of action in terms of the values they hold, and to assume responsibility for carrying out decisions. These factors constitute maturity. We take students where we find them, as immature as they may be, and lead them toward a state of greater maturity. This is teaching.

What Is Our Role in Evaluation?

An important aspect of helping pupils develop self-direction is increasing their ability to make judgments. Through assisting them in the acquisition of skill in the evaluative process, we improve the quality of their planning and working together.

The evaluative process involves clearly defining goals or

purposes, collecting evidence of change, making judgments about the change, and revising plans in light of the judgments. Our function is to acquaint pupils with the steps and to work with them as individuals and groups in learning the techniques involved.

One of the difficult tasks is collecting and recording evidence of change. Even if we could keep all the records ourselves, which we can't, it would be undesirable to do so. Pupils have as much evidence, or more, about their growth than we do. Further, deciding upon the types of growth to record forces the pupils to make sharper definitions of their purposes. The act of recording is a process of analysis and it serves to intensify the impact of the experience.

In making judgments and revising plans, our function is to participate in a manner that will increase the pupil's skill in making judgments and his confidence in relying on them. If we decide we are not helping him grow as much as we should, we can supply information about other situations and standards that have been developed. We can contrast the present with the past. We can raise questions which focus the pupil's attention on aspects of the data he is ignoring. We can note steps that are being omitted.

But the final decision is not ours alone. In the evaluative process we attempt to get all the persons concerned into the judgment-making—the pupil, the parent, ourselves, and others. We serve as the coordinator and expediter.

What Is Our Role in Individualizing Instruction?

We promote an efficient learning situation by knowing each pupil and his needs. Objectives can't be for the class as a whole. We have certain types of growth that we hope all students will make, but it is an inefficient approach if we attempt to apply the same treatment to all students. We need to know each pupil well enough to formulate for our guidance a list of the special areas in which we want to help him and the types of experiences which we feel will bring about the

desired growth. We need to know him well enough, too, to know his real strengths and abilities and to concentrate on providing the types of opportunities for experience which will strengthen those abilities. More can be done to help a student by stressing his strengths than by helping him overcome his weaknesses.

Individualizing instruction is also the creating of a rich environment. If we want all pupils to learn in our classroom, we need to provide a multitude of stimuli, because individuals react to different things. Pupils select from their environment the factors which their past experiences and their purposes make meaningful to them. If we want to be able to assist all the pupils in our class, we provide as many stimuli as we can in our classroom. As we have such an environment, the teaching consists of: planning with pupils the kinds of interaction with the features of the environment that they choose to make; assisting them to select important questions to study or activities to conduct; aiding them to discover the types of skill and the types of information that are needed to answer the question or finish the project; and helping them use the resources that we have available to complete the task.

We teach for efficient learning when we have a wide variety of teaching materials. Not all students learn in the same way. Not all students find the same type of material interesting. Not all students can use the same type of material, because of wide differences in individual ability. If we hope to teach all our pupils, we shall have many different types of materials available that they may use in their learning experiences.

Classes should not be expected to work in lock-step. Our challenge is to organize the class in such a way that individuals and groups of people with different abilities can move ahead rapidly or can go more slowly than others. In the average class there is a range of reading ability of approximately seven to nine years. Pupils who are four years ahead of the group shouldn't be kept back with the average students where they will waste their time. The student who is four years behind

the group cannot keep up. To insist that he read the same book and do the same things as a student who is seven years ahead of him in reading skill is a waste of his time. It is like confronting him with a task in a language that he does not understand. In any situation, the differences among the students are so

great, *in terms of needs as well as in terms of ability,* that teaching, if it is to be efficient, must be put on an individual basis with individuals and groups free to move in terms of their own achievement.

We teach for efficient learning if there is practice on individual needs. Not all learning can be creative experience. In certain types of learning, we need to re-emphasize the patterns we have learned. The spelling of a difficult word or the fingering in typing are examples. We do this through practice or drill.

Drill has received a lot of criticism because it has been used indiscriminately. We have drilled all the class on the fundamentals, when actually many students in the class had already mastered them. Drill of a total group is almost always a waste of time for many students because the brighter pupils will already have acquired the things that we are trying to help the other students develop. The student who acquires information and skill quickly may find the use of drill unnecessary. For the student, however, who takes time in acquiring skill, periods of practice on his individual needs will be important. To be efficient, the practice will give the student an opportunity to

use the skill he is acquiring in real situations that are slightly different from previous situations. In this manner, thinking is involved in the practice and the interaction is more intense.

Individualizing instruction involves helping people learn about themselves. It is a process of helping a person ask himself the questions he needs to ask to answer the conflicts that he has. It is a process of suggesting answers, several possible answers, which the individual can evaluate for himself in terms of the data that he has. No teacher can know as much about a student as the student knows. Thus, we raise the questions with the student which help him interpret the data that he has about himself.

To help individuals learn efficiently requires that we study them—their abilities, their interests, their backgrounds, their attitudes, their values, and their problems—and plan with each a program adapted to his purposes and needs. We do not need to be concerned that all pupils do not have the same curriculum. They could not even though we tried to give it to them.

What Is Our Role in Cooperating with Out-of-Class Groups?

Our class does not work alone. It is a part of the school and of the community. Through our position as teacher, we find ourselves confronted with responsibility for coordinating the activities of the class with outside groups and individuals.

The class activities are restricted by the situation in which it operates but its resources are increased through the presence of others. The school and community provide a rich laboratory and confront us and the class with the necessity for working out techniques of cooperative planning and cooperative utilization of resources.

Through the student council, joint committees, and intergroup social affairs and projects, we can increase pupils' understanding of others, respect for the rights of others, willingness to work and share with others, and ability to plan, execute, and evaluate together.

As a member of the faculty, we increase cooperation by: sharing our resources, taking time to plan with other faculty members, serving on school-wide committees, undertaking joint projects with other teachers and other classes, encouraging the principal to operate democratically, and participating willingly in school-wide projects.

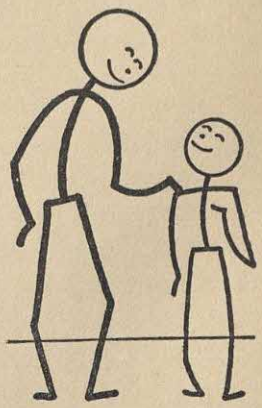
We promote cooperation with the community by: planning with parents, using community personnel as resource people in our class, establishing advisory committees for our class projects, seeking ways to involve our pupils in community activities, assuming responsibility for the improvement of the community, and keeping the community informed about the work of our class.

We perform our cooperative role as we look for opportunities to work with other groups, recognize that time spent working with others is not time lost for us, assist pupils to work out the machinery for inter-group activities, question attitudes of intolerance and impatience as they arise, and aid in improving working relations with adults.

Preview

Throughout the remainder of this book we shall examine the procedures by which the teacher can carry out the functions outlined in the preceding pages. In the Appendix we shall present a brief résumé of selected significant research on which this interpretation of teaching for efficient learning is based.

Teaching Is Skill in Human Relations



Chapter 3

What Quality of Human Relations Do We Seek?

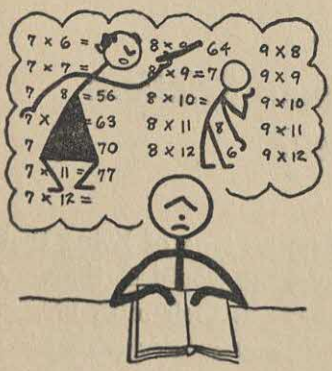
The important quality of any class is the type of living that occurs in it. The meek, the aggressive, the troubled, the very slow, the robust, and the frail—all have as their most urgent problem that of *learning to live with their associates* so that the living is good. Childhood and adolescence are the times when the foundations of this learning are firmly established in the personality. School, the place in which boys and girls spend a large part of their waking hours, is where much of this learning occurs.

Although the emotional climate of the classroom is conditioned by the community and the school in which the class group exists, it consists primarily of the teacher's feelings about himself, and about his pupils, and each pupil's feelings about himself, his classmates, and his teacher. The interaction of these emotions and their manifestations in the school and community setting are the human relations of the class.

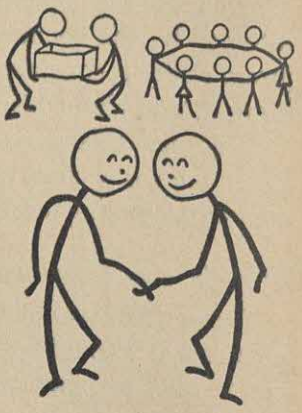
Why Is the Emotional Climate Important?

The emotional climate of a learning situation determines how efficiently the pupil will learn the facts and skills desired. The child who is emotionally disturbed cannot concentrate on learning his multiplication tables or on how to read. The major portion of his attention and energy is focused on how to relieve the tension caused by the emotional disturbance. Unless the emotional content of the situation is right, the subject-

matter learnings will not occur. In any situation, boys and girls are striving to feel right about themselves, to feel that they have worth, to feel that they are accepted. Other learnings are secondary and will not receive the full attention of students until these first learnings receive satisfaction. Only when children work in an atmosphere in which they can respect themselves and know that they are respected by others, are they ready to begin learning about science, mathematics, and grammar.



Not only does the emotional aspect of the environment determine the efficiency of learning. *It provides some of the most basic learning which we have.* We have not recognized clearly enough that the actual emotional content itself *is being learned.* The type of human relations that exist within the school teaches the youngster how to feel toward others and what to believe about others. To varying degrees he learns: to accept all people, or to reject certain people who do not measure up to standards imposed by the group or by the teacher; to encourage people and have faith in them, or to suspect the other person and expect only failure to live up to responsibilities; that it is good to work together, or that he must work alone, without help; that adults are people who are helpful and can be trusted, or that he must cover up his true emotional beliefs and feelings when he is talking to them; that most situations offer many choices, or that most situations are either "all good" or "all bad." In short,



he learns to some extent and in some forms inclusiveness, open-mindedness, acceptance, and confidence, or exclusiveness, closed-mindedness, rejection, and suspicion. *We learn what we live.*

Further, the emotional climate determines the significance with which we endow an idea and the use to which we put it. For example, if a student encounters the writings of Shakespeare in an atmosphere of good humor, respect among students, free sharing of interpretations, he is likely to feel that the plays are worth reading, that the ideas expressed have application today, and that the author would be fun to read in spare time. If, on the other hand, Shakespeare is studied in a classroom in which the teacher has all the answers and the student may only guess, where too many wrong guesses will be punished by ridicule or failure, where students may not interchange ideas or laugh unless the teacher thinks a line is humorous, the odds are good that the student will not give Shakespeare's ideas serious consideration or return to his works for inspiration or leisure-time reading. The potency of an idea is determined by the emotional matrix in which it is embedded.

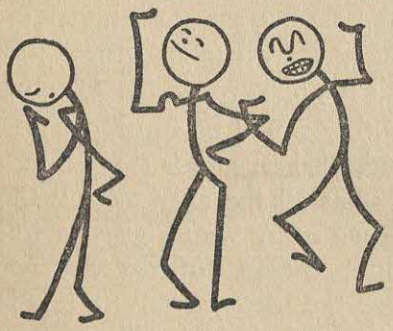
A second-grade class in Kentucky gave real evidence that they were living in a good emotional climate. They were writing an account of the day's activities. The children dictated and the teacher wrote their statements on the blackboard. They had agreed upon:

Today is April 3, 1952.
The sun is shining.
It is a beautiful day.
We have been playing store.
Miss Hayes brought a visitor to our class.

The teacher had had several pupils read what they had stated. Finally, she turned to the total group and asked if there was anything they wanted to add. One little boy raised his hand quickly and, grinning from ear to ear, yelled "School is fun." The entire group chorused, "Yes! Yes!"

How Do We Feel About Ourselves?

An important asset or liability to the establishment of a good emotional climate is how we, as teachers, feel about ourselves. If we feel inadequate, superior, or rebellious, we cannot effectively help pupils create a wholesome emotional climate in which all feel that they belong, accept others, and help each other. If we want to promote good human relations, we begin our teaching by examining ourselves and identifying and working to eliminate those qualities within ourselves which hinder them.



If we are not confident of our ability to work successfully in situations that arise, we are always on guard. We seek ways of covering up our incompetence, of proving our superiority, of gaining personal security, even though the techniques we use mean infringing on the rights of others. We must always win. We develop any technique that we can for making people aware of our superiority. One way is to hold up exceedingly high standards in the area in which we are highly competent, and to reject boys and girls who cannot achieve these competencies. We keep pupils from ever getting close enough to know us in order to prevent their discovering our weaknesses.

A major portion of our feelings of inadequacy comes from pretending that we have no weaknesses, from creating a false picture of ourselves. All of us have weaknesses, teachers as well as pupils. Unless we recognize and accept this condition, we have to resort to tactics that make it impossible for us to work on a friendly, cooperative basis with children. We need to be able to say, "I don't know," simply, humbly, without shame, confusion, or hesitation. Knowing that we have weak-

nesses, all of us can contribute from our strengths. We can recognize with children the weaknesses that each of us has, but at the same time we can bring to the fore the special contributions that each of us can make. This stress on the positive is something that applies to the teacher's contributions as much as it does to the contribution of pupils. If we make this approach, it puts us in a position in which there is no need for proving our ability to others. We accept ourselves as we are and we know our own competencies. We contribute what we have and expect others to do the same. We work to eradicate our weaknesses so we can be of more help to others.

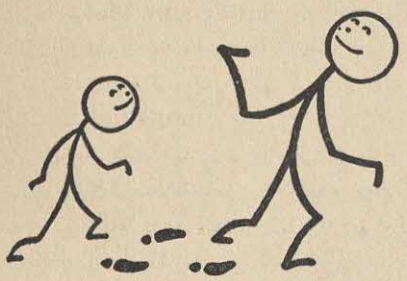
We need to feel sufficiently confident and mature so that we can consider pupil behavior objectively. If we are, we examine constantly the type of treatment that we give boys and girls to see whether or not it is an attempt to get even for something that they have done to us. As a teacher, we cannot wear our feelings on our sleeve. A mature person can accept the action of a less mature person, can analyze that action, and can take the steps necessary for the less mature person to grow more mature. To the extent that we fight back at youngsters to get even with them, we are reflecting our own immaturity and are revealing our inadequacy to help create an environment in which boys and girls can become more mature. We must have enough security within ourselves to be able to put the welfare of the pupil first. Only then can we recognize that there are times when it is better for us to lose than it is for us to win, when it is more important for an insecure boy or girl to have the experience of winning in any issue with the teacher. An expression of hostility may be a symptom of disturbance rather than a token of personal dislike or antagonism.

To the extent that we feel superior, we decrease our potential for promoting good human relations. When we feel and demonstrate feelings of superiority, we alienate the other person. When we feel superior, we make it impossible for us to really appreciate the other person and to understand the contribution that he can make to group living and to us! When we can't

appreciate or understand or really know the other person, we can't expect to have good relationships with him or to help him have good relationships with other people.

On the surface, feelings of superiority may seem to come out of an ability to do more complicated mathematical operations or to handle verbs with more skill. Or we may feel superior because we know certain facts that other people don't know or because we have a different color or religion or nationality, or even because we have more money. All these feelings of superiority, however, are based on a feeling of insecurity that makes it necessary for us to be superior to other people in order to be safe and secure within ourselves.

Some feelings of superiority are very subtle. Some of us feel that pupils grow only as they become more and more like us. This is a hard stereotype to avoid. Our experiences have led us to certain conclusions and have given us certain skills. We have been employed by boards of education to help boys and girls grow. By the very process of employing us, the board of education may seem to us to have put the stamp of approval on the type of growth that we have made.



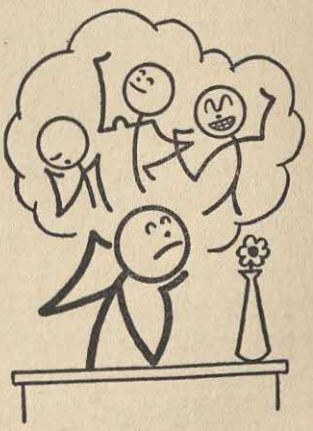
Some of us have moved from that assumption to the belief that it is our job to help boys and girls to be like us. No doubt we are quite sincere. We really believe that we have the answer to the world's problems, that we are the type of person who succeeds best in the world. Because of these beliefs, we attempt to have boys and girls become like us.

But when we attempt to get others to be like us, we reject the multiplicity of values that are within our own culture. We fail to recognize the many contributions that people can make that are different from our own contributions. We fail to recognize that ours is a plural culture in which there are many skills,

understandings, and values that contribute to the welfare and development of the total social group.

When we feel that others must attain our status, we sometimes provide the type of teaching and guidance that leads people to move in the direction of goals that may be blind alleys for them. For example, a study conducted in the late thirties showed that 95 per cent of the boys and girls in American high schools were seeking white-collar jobs. This same study shows that only 5 per cent of the jobs in America at that time were white-collar jobs. Approximately 90 per cent of our population in American secondary schools were moving toward jobs that they could never occupy. Teachers who believe that youngsters should be molded in their pattern must accept a share of the responsibility for such false guidance.

If we feel that teaching is unworthy of our best efforts and are rebellious against an unkind fate that has forced us into teaching, we have feelings that interfere with our creating good human relations in the classroom. If we feel that teaching is just a job and that we must put up with the "brats" to draw our salary, it is easy to guess that our classroom will be one in which we will be on one side and the pupils will be lined up against us. Pupils sense how the teacher feels toward them and formulate their own relationship toward the teacher by the attitude that the teacher takes first toward them. Pupils respond to the type of treatment that they get, and any attitude of superiority or resentment on our part will alienate them and prevent them from considering us as a person to be trusted or accepted.



If we feel superior, inadequate, or resentful, we cannot be satisfied with our present status. We can change by recognizing

that all persons have these feelings in varying degrees, but that they decrease as we focus our attention more sharply on how we can help others and decrease the amount of time we spend in self-pity or self-worship.

How Do We Feel About Pupils?

A beginning teacher in Kentucky found an eighteen-year-old boy, homely and weighing over two hundred pounds, in her sophomore English class. His appearance and reputation as a trouble-maker and poor student made the teacher wish that he had been assigned to the class of a more experienced colleague. For two months the teacher endured him, dreading the period when he appeared in her room—and he made no progress. One night, in a moment of soul-searching, the young woman suddenly realized that she hated the boy, that she was wishing him failure rather than success. Conscience-stricken, she asked herself if there wasn't at least one good quality in the youth and resolved to search for one the very next day. By her own testimony, the teacher was amazed by the change that came over the boy in the next few weeks. Actually, the basic change was in the teacher. She began to see strong qualities in the boy which she had been overlooking.

We find what we expect to find in other people, and persons tend to live up to what we expect of them.

If we are to be effective, we want each person in our class to succeed. We are not with the class to sort and classify and label. We are not there to help some to succeed and cause others to fail. Our job is to hope and to work for the growth of all. It is our function to help each pupil develop his strengths and overcome his weaknesses.

If we are going to help the total class, we have faith in each pupil. We believe that each has potential leadership and ability to make a contribution to the group and to society. Even though his talents are hidden beneath a surface of indifference, hostility, filth, or social ineptness, we believe that each child

can be better than he is, and our success is judged by the extent to which each realizes his potential. Like the Kentucky teacher, we start looking for the good points.

All students, like teachers, have weaknesses. None will have all the answers or all the necessary skills. These weaknesses are opportunities for us to be of assistance, not stigmas for which we condemn a child. A machine-scored test can locate a lack of knowledge or skill, but a teacher by faith and by providing the experiences that will promote the needed growth can help a child improve himself.

If we are to provide leadership for all, we are willing for pupils to be different. We will find that strengths vary from pupil to pupil. Elementary teachers, who work with pupils in many different types of activities, have a better opportunity than do secondary teachers, who work with children in a limited field, to see the range of abilities possessed by the individual and the group. Because of this greater breadth of experience with the child, many elementary teachers have gone further in accepting and encouraging different kinds of contribution and leadership. All of us can go still further in accepting and utilizing different patterns of development. Singing, art, humor, human relations, and sensitivity are as important as abstract mental manipulations. Let's recognize it.

Moreover, we will be willing for pupils to have purposes that are different from our own. If we recognize that motivation comes from the vision developed through past experience, we know it is useless to expect pupils from different backgrounds to have the same purposes and ambitions that we do. We recognize the difference, and let the pupils know we understand it, but we do not proclaim their goals less worthy than ours.

In short, we want to know pupils, to understand them, to recognize their strengths, weaknesses, and purposes, and to have faith in their potential and our ability to help them realize it.

How Do We Treat Pupils?

Is our acceptance of children shown in our courtesy to them? We teach courtesy as we create an environment in which people are naturally courteous toward each other, and the major factor in developing such an atmosphere is our attitude and bearing. We teach more by action than by statements.

If we hope to teach boys and girls to be courteous to each other, we are courteous to them. Courtesy includes such things as remembering and calling them by name, speaking to them as they come into the room, acknowledging requests, saying "please" to them just as we expect them to say "please" to us, asking permission of individuals and the group in just the same type of situation in which we expect them to ask permission of us. We are as much bound by the code of behavior as the pupils are and any deviation from it on our part requires as much of an apology or explanation as any deviation on the part of a pupil. If we set ourselves above the code of behavior that is accepted by the group, we signify that codes are binding only on those who are not in a position of authority. We teach respect for manners and mores and ways of behaving by the way we accept our role within the group as a member of the group and live by standards that have been established by the classroom society.

If we expect boys and girls to call us by the title that we prefer, we have the same responsibility to them. If a child wants to be called "Lucky" rather than Nathaniel, we should abide by his decision. If he wishes to be called "Bill" rather than Mr. Smith, that too should be a decision of his that we respect.

Working with children in a courteous manner requires that we treat them as adults. When we talk down to children, we belittle them. When we treat them as inferiors and as persons of lesser ability, we are making clear to them that we behave toward people in accordance with their power and position rather than in accordance with their individual worth.

As we attempt to teach courtesy, we are faced with the fact that in many communities the manners that exist are not acceptable to us. In such a situation, it is our job to help youngsters become aware of the different kinds of manners and to plan with them which of the various ways of behaving they want to practice and follow in the classroom. From time to time we will want to evaluate with youngsters the satisfaction or lack of satisfaction with the code of behavior that exists within the class group. Our hope is that we will bring about an improvement as we take time in our regular program for discussion of better ways of living together.

We need, however, to be able to view progress, or lack of it, quite objectively, and recognize that the growth we hope for may require a higher price in cultural conflict than the children are able to pay.

How Do We Want Each Student To Feel About Himself?

Students, like the teacher, must feel right about themselves if good human relations are to prevail. Unless each student can believe that he has worth and is able to contribute to the group, his potential for aggression or withdrawal is strong.

If good human relations are to prevail in the class, each pupil must feel:

that he belongs—is accepted, will be missed if he is not present, will be welcomed back after each absence, and has equal opportunity in the group;

that he is at ease with the group—recognizing that he will make mistakes but knowing that they will be accepted as learning experiences;

that he is successful—is accomplishing, knows where he is going, is putting forth his best effort to reach his goals, and feels confident;

that he has a responsibility to the group—can help others, and can make a positive contribution to the success of the group.

Helping a pupil achieve these feelings about himself involves all aspects of teaching: planning, group work, individual counseling, evaluation, and consultation with parents. Each month that we work with pupils should bring them closer to achieving these attitudes toward themselves.

How Do We Want Students To Feel About Each Other?

The fourth dimension of human relations in the class is how the students feel about each other. A wholesome attitude of the student toward himself provides a good cornerstone, but equally essential is the positive concern of pupil for pupil.

We want students to know each other, and to learn about the backgrounds and interests of each person in the group, in the hope that from this knowledge will develop common interests and appreciation of one another.

But knowing is not enough. Sometimes information about the other person leads to dislike, fear, or hatred.

There are many cues which indicate the type of pupil-to-pupil relationships that exist in the class. One of them is the kind of remark pupils make about the total group.

> In one school, in which the pupils were grouped homogeneously on the basis of their I.Q. scores, a class that was at the bottom of the list was making very little progress in school and displayed a lackadaisical attitude toward school work. When their teacher attempted to help, through an evaluation session in which the class was asked how their effectiveness as a group could be improved, one of the pupils remarked, "We are the dumb-bells of the school. None of us ever do anything worth while and we are waiting until we are old enough to quit school."

Even though this school attempted to fool boys and girls by revising the names given to the low and high sections each year, the students were not misled. They knew their classmates and they knew the students who were in other sections. They sensed the frustration their classmates felt and they had been

able to detect the attitude that teachers held toward them. As a defense measure, they had adopted the attitude that not much could be expected of them. As the conversation continued, the student added, "We don't have a chance. Not one of us has ever won anything." The class had lost its pride and its sense of ability to achieve. They felt that the cards were

stacked against them and that no one from their group could exert real leadership in the school. When any group of people has been taught to feel about itself as this class did, two things have been destroyed: self-respect, which is the basis of good mental hygiene, and initiative, which makes possible continued growth.

One teacher, working with a similar group, put her major emphasis during the first few months that the group was together on building confidence in the group. When the school undertook a paper drive, the teacher put more time and effort into helping the class win the drive than she did in teaching basic skills. She was more concerned that this group of boys and girls should feel the confidence that came from winning recognition from the total school than she was about moving ahead on scheduled class work. She knew that until this group came to respect itself most of her efforts in teaching skills and facts would be futile. And they won.

After the group had regained some of its self-confidence through this achievement, she was ready to move on to other activities in which the group had constantly failed. An interesting side light on this particular class was that most of the members came from homes of the lower economic level. In previous contests held in the school, such as raising money for the Red Cross or selling student activity tickets, they had never been

able to compete successfully because their parents had not been able to contribute as much as those from a more favored economic status.

When schools allow their competition between class groups to give the privileged economic groups an advantage, they tend further to decrease the self-respect of youngsters who already are faced with many difficulties.

On the other hand, some groups never question their status or their rights. Such comments as "We always win," "We have the best students in the school in our class," "We have so much we will give our old toys to the poor boys and girls," all indicate feelings of superiority. These groups need to work on the concept of sharing on an equal basis rather than of giving out of their riches to those who are of inferior status.

Another indication of the way class members feel about themselves is their attitude toward the classroom itself. When students take pride in the appearance of their room and continually want to improve it, we have an indication of high morale in the group. When they begin to think about decorating their room for special holidays or their own enjoyment and begin to analyze the special contributions each can make, we know that a sense of groupness is developing. When they bring their friends and parents to see the classroom and the activities that take place there, we can be assured that the relationships in the room are moving in the right direction. When they want to come back after school and work on projects or plans, the atmosphere is good.

The social relationships of a class group are shown by whether or not the students want to be together. Does the class want to have class parties or do certain members hold back and say that they are too busy? All of us are constantly making choices in terms of the things we value most. When a percentage of the class group indicates that they value other relationships more than associating with members of the group, they are making clear that the human relationships within the classroom have not moved to a high plane.

By observing the class members at dances and football games, we can tell whether they have developed enough liking for each other to enjoy being together.

Another index is the kind of remark that pupils make about each other. When one pupil makes a remark that belittles another member of the group, he is belittling the entire group. He is saying that the class has not become a group as far as he is concerned. It doesn't include the person he is belittling. On the other hand, when members begin to show concern in off-the-record conversation about the ways they can help other class members to grow, class relations are moving in the right direction. When one student says, "Don talks too much and is too dogmatic in what he says—what can we do to help him?," we have evidence of growing concern for each other. If three months later ten children out of the thirty are raising questions about how they can help others, group feeling within the class is growing.

One of the technical devices for finding out how students feel toward each other is the sociogram, in which students are asked to indicate the persons with whom they would like to work. Although it is an effective device for revealing grouping and isolation within a class, it has certain disadvantages. Care is necessary to insure that its use does not start boys and girls thinking about people they like and dislike, thus increasing differences rather than developing common concerns. It can be an instrument for building exclusiveness rather than co-operation.

Why use a sociogram at all, then? Isn't it better simply to be with the students and observe them closely? Hasn't the sociogram technique been validated by comparing its results with the results obtained through the insight of teachers who study children in other ways? What if the evidence from the sociogram contradicts the evidence from observation? Which is more valid?

The sociogram is a short-cut technique to help us collect data about a group when our time for individual child study

is limited. It helps us identify the pupils who need the most help in improving their human relations skills. But the evidence it provides is not superior to other evidence that we collect through continued association with the children. After rapport has been established in a group, the use of the sociogram may be planned with pupils as one way of collecting additional data to be used in planning how to work together.

As we work with a group, we strive to assist the children to discover things they enjoy doing together and to diminish the procedures that separate and cause dissension. We seek to live with them in a manner that encourages them to accept each other, to develop concern for each other, and to have pride in the achievements of all members of the group. We want them to know each other's strengths and weaknesses and to assume responsibility for helping each other to grow.

How Do We Want Students To Feel About Us?

A group of California teachers concerned with good human relations in the classroom stated that they wanted their pupils to believe they were:

(a) *friendly.* We want our students to believe that we want to be friends with each member of the class, that we are approachable, and that we accept each one as a person of importance and worth.

(b) *trustworthy.* We want our students to believe that we can be trusted, that we can be depended upon to live up to our word, that we will not take advantage of persons less able than ourselves, and that we will play fair with all students at all times.

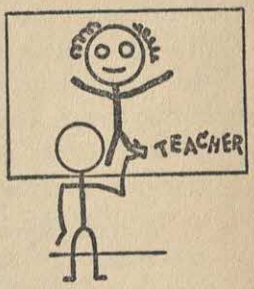
(c) *helpful.* We want our students to believe that we are with them to help them, that we are resource persons to whom they can turn for assistance in solving their problems, that we believe our job is to work with them and provide guidance as needed or requested, and that we respect their purposes and problems.

(d) *wise and skilled.* We want our students to believe that even though we make mistakes we know our subject mat-

ter fields, that we keep informed of developments in our specialization and in world events, that we are versatile and can apply our knowledge and skills to many problems, and that we are still learning with them.

(e) *consistent.* We want our students to believe that we have a set of values that we live by, that we are predictable, that we will exercise the same type of self-control from day to day, and that we will work honestly with the group.

But boys and girls do not regard all teachers in this light. Children bring to the classroom the stereotypes of teachers which are a part of their social environment. In the past, teachers have been looked upon as outside the typical community pattern. Parents have said that the teacher was supposed to set an example and that actions in which he engaged should be judged by an even higher standard than the action of parents. In some homes the teacher has been looked down upon as a person slightly inferior or, if the teacher was considered to be a person who knew more, certainly an impractical person who went into a less remunerative type of activity. Children acquire the attitudes of their parents and of the community toward teachers.

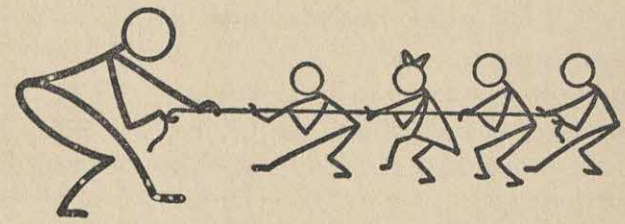


After the first few months in school, pupils develop attitudes toward teachers that grow out of their experiences with them. By the time a child gets to third, fourth, or fifth grade, he has had many experiences that condition the point of view he takes toward any new teacher whom he meets. Either he is willing to accept that teacher and to give him a fair break or he schemes to put the teacher in an unfortunate, undesirable position. Some pupils believe that teachers are persons who cannot be trusted. Their experiences with teachers have led them to the conclusion that you can't tell teachers anything and have your confidences kept. Other students look upon teachers as persons who punish. They have had sufficient experience with

authoritarian teachers to conclude that all teachers are dictators, people who force boys and girls to behave in a set way without any consideration of their feelings, interests, and purposes.

Still other boys and girls come to the classroom with a watchful attitude toward teachers. Their experiences have led them to believe that some teachers are good and that some are bad, and that you try to determine first of all the type of person the new teacher is. In some classrooms, boys and girls have developed signals by which they communicate to each other their idea of the teacher. During the first few weeks with any teacher, they test him to see if he is fair, if he is understanding, if he can be trusted, if he will keep his word and respect confidences.

The experiences of some students have led them to look upon school as a game. They see the teacher and themselves as opposing teams, each trying to put over on the other as much



as they can. They see school work as an activity that teachers try to manipulate them into doing. They conceive of themselves as successful when they are able to outwit the teacher and do the things they wish rather than the things they think the teacher wishes.

Other youngsters come to school with the conviction that the teacher is a helpful person, concerned with helping boys and girls to grow into more useful citizens. The child whose father or mother is a teacher will have a favorable attitude toward the teachers he meets at school, if his home relationships are satisfactory. And pupils who have found their former teachers

lovable and helpful will be favorably inclined to a new teacher, at least until he proves himself an unsatisfactory person.

We may expect all these attitudes, and others, in our classes. We may expect to be on trial for the first few weeks with any class. Distrust, antagonism, or hate can be overcome in time if our behavior is satisfactory to pupils. But, by the same token, love and respect for teachers can be dispelled if we are the kind of person who deserves hatred and recrimination. We have an opportunity with each class to build in pupils either a favorable or an unfavorable attitude toward us.

When the group comes together for the first time, we have an opportunity to take positive steps in helping it get organized. In the process, we may or may not win a place in it for ourselves. If we are joining a class that has worked together before, we move into a society and a culture that have already been created. We are a new force in the situation, but we can become effective only as we are accepted by the group. As long as we are outside the group, the attitudes, values, and points of view that will really matter will continue to be those of the members themselves. We may be able to force the group by physical power or by other clubs to accede to our wishes, but mere submission will not be effective in improving human relations within the group or the efficiency of the learning situation. If we hope to be accepted as friendly, trustworthy, helpful, wise, skilled, and consistent, our actions must show that we are worthy of such acceptance.

The human relations in a class are not static. They change with the experiences the children have together. The quality of human relations either improves or deteriorates, and our responsibility is to demonstrate constantly that we value a way of living together in which each person is accepted, respected, and encouraged to achieve.

Where Do We Start?

When a class meets for the first time, it brings with it to the classroom the groupings, attitudes, desires, and ways of

work of the community from which its members come. The background of community living serves as a springboard from which class activities grow.

Each class member has a picture of his family's position in the community. He knows how other people look upon his family; he knows it from the expressions on their faces when his family's name is mentioned; he knows it from the attitudes that other people have displayed in their actions toward the members of his family; he has seen how other members of the community treat his father; he has seen how other women talk down to or play up to his mother; he has seen his sister accepted or rejected by other girls; he has seen his brother a part of a team or excluded from it.

Each youngster not only has a picture of his own family and its place in the community but he has a knowledge of the position of every other family that he knows. He knows which families have power, which families can exert influence in the church or with the local city government, which families belong to the controlling group of the community, which families are accepted by the community, and which families are rejected by the community.

These impressions may not be accurate, but they influence his behavior. They give him confidence or lack of confidence. They move him to aggression, withdrawal, or active participation. Youngsters who are members of privileged groups, formed by parental contacts or by youth organizations, formal or informal, within the community, bring their acceptance to the class as foundation stones for *total* group acceptance of each other. They also bring their feelings of superiority and lack of consideration for the feelings of non-members as barriers to *total* group unity. Parenthetically, such handicaps are multiplied when the school has social fraternities and sororities within its organization.

Members of the same gang, children who attend the same church, pupils who came from the same rural elementary school to the consolidated high school, members of a minority racial

or nationality element of the community may all constitute social groups within a classroom. The pattern varies from community to community.

Youth who have been excluded bring their desire to belong as positive inclinations and their resentment and overt aggression toward the more privileged as liabilities to the building of satisfying group relations.

But our class differs from a community. It has the advantage of being a frontier where people can meet together in a new environment and develop the type of social organization they find good. As a new social group, we have an opportunity to look at our surroundings and to make judgments concerning the types of relationships that bring satisfactions and those that are not as satisfying, and then in terms of those judgments to begin to devise ways of working together that will increase satisfactions for all.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Seek to eliminate personal feelings of inferiority, superiority, or aggression.
   - (a) Refuse to allow your feelings to be hurt.
   - (b) Never attempt to get even with a child.
   - (c) Be willing to lose an issue if it will help an individual or a class.
2. Be willing for pupils to develop in their own pattern.
3. Look for the good qualities in pupils.
4. Have faith in the potential of each pupil.
5. Be as courteous to pupils as you expect them to be to you.
   - (a) Follow the code of behavior established as closely as students are expected to do.
6. Recognize that all persons have weaknesses. Accept each as he is.
7. Encourage each member of the group to contribute his special skills. Work to help him overcome his weaknesses.
   - (a) Attempt to help each child feel he belongs, is accepted, is achieving, and is responsible to the group.

8. Seek to develop in pupils a concern for the feelings and welfare of others.

9. Observe pupil behavior in non-class situations to get clues concerning the quality of human relations in the group.

10. Involve the class in group activities or projects.

11. Seek to be accepted by the pupils as a member of the group.

12. Expect some students, as a result of their past experiences, to dislike and distrust teachers.

13. Study the social organization of your community.

14. Have the class make judgments about their satisfaction with existing human relations in the group.

Chapter 4

How Can We Improve Human Relations in the Class?

Our basic problem in improving human relations in a class is how to work with the group so that each pupil will feel accepted, at ease, successful, and responsible for helping others. These values constitute the foundation stones of good human relations in a classroom or society.

How Do We Help a Pupil Feel He Is Accepted?

Acceptance for each pupil means that he belongs, that the other members of the group want him, that they are trying to help him rather than to hurt or make fun of him. It does not mean that he is never criticized or told that he is wrong, or even occasionally punished by the group. It means that he feels free to come to the group at any time without being afraid of crowding in or being in the way. He also feels that it is safe for him to leave the group when he wants to. He may be talked about after he is gone, but he knows that the other members will not try to hurt him or deprive him of his rights. He is accepted by the group when he feels "free to come and safe to go."

We can help pupils to accept each other by accepting each one ourselves. How can we do this?

At the very lowest level, we seek to know him. We learn his name, where he is from, what his parents are like, his background, his likes, his interests, his dislikes, his prejudices, his ambitions. Also, we are careful not to hold his previous behavior against him as we learn more about him. We do not say at

the first sign of behavior of which we disapprove, "Oh well, that's all you can expect from a youngster with such a record." We avoid analyzing the records simply as a means of spotting trouble-makers and choosing allies.

Parenthetically, using the records to determine which students we will have to guard against is highly unprofessional. The only valid reason for us to see a pupil's record is to gain information about his strengths or weaknesses that will help us determine how we can help him most.

Accepting a youngster also means refusing to take advantage of him. Because we have had more experience and have had an opportunity to study the techniques of winning situations in the classroom, we know how to win. But if we use our advantage unfairly, we destroy whatever progress we have made in winning the confidence of the youngster. Any action of ours that decreases his faith in our sincerity and willingness to help him lessens the opportunity for us to be of real assistance to him. One break destroys the fabric. If a child finds that we have passed along to another teacher something that he has told us in confidence, he will classify us as unreliable if he is charitable, or a dishonest fraud if he has a long-standing distrust of teachers.

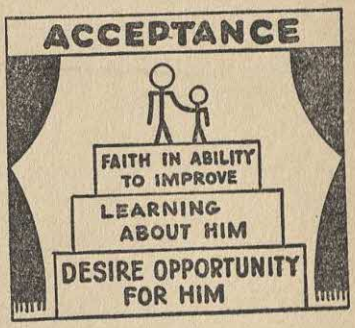
We show our acceptance of boys and girls by being willing for them to be themselves. When we ask a youngster to be like us or like certain children of whom we approve, we are keeping him from being himself. We are saying to him, "You aren't as good as we are. The only way you can be acceptable is to be like us." If he happens to have come from a different social background, it is impossible for him to behave just as we do. It is impossible for him to have the same beliefs, social graces, prejudices, and values.

The following questions may help us to examine our acceptance of people:

Are we willing for boys and girls to have different purposes, values, and social skills? Do we lead our pupils to feel that we are thinking with them and that all of us together, through the

process of interaction, are gaining new insight into what constitutes good human relations? Or do we assume that we alone know what constitutes good human relations? Are we willing to think with all the members of the class about ways in which everyone working together can help one another to grow? Do we believe that we can learn from each of our pupils?

Accepting a pupil does not mean that we have to approve of him or of his behavior. It means rather that we want him to have the opportunity to improve, that we try sincerely to find out what he is like and what he believes; that we support him in his belief that he has value and the ability to improve; that we have faith that he will become more worth while.



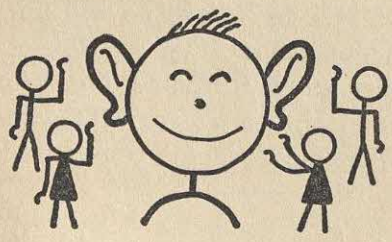
Accepting a dirty youngster, for example, does not mean that we like his filth. It does not mean that we allow him to stay dirty in our class. It means that we do not establish prejudices against him because he is not clean, that we make provisions for him to take baths at school, that we encourage his parents to provide clean clothes for him and to help him stay clean, that we continue to believe he will improve even though he fails numerous times, that we do not isolate him or encourage the other pupils to shame him. We want him to learn to value cleanliness, but we are willing to keep working with him even when he does not respond as readily as we have hoped.

In one of the New York City junior high schools, special emphasis was placed on the acceptance of pupils who were having difficulty in the school. A teacher was placed in charge of an ungraded group. Children who were not getting along in other classes were allowed to join the group, and others were assigned to it. No child was forced to do anything during the time he was there. Facilities for work and play were provided,

but the pupils could simply sit if they wanted to. They could say or do anything they pleased as long as they did not harm other pupils. As each child behaved in the way he chose, the teacher studied him and talked with him in order to help him determine the causes of his difficulties and what he really wanted to do. When a pupil felt like working, he did so. When he felt that he was ready to return to the group from which he had come, he was permitted to. The emphasis was on encouraging the child to help himself rather than on trying to change him in accordance with a teacher's pattern. But the teacher's acceptance of a child did not entitle him to engage in behavior harmful to the other children.

The remedial treatment applied in helping these pupils reestablish themselves as worthy members of the school was simply the teacher's acceptance. If all teachers in the school had accepted pupils more fully, the remedial group would not have been necessary. In this school this procedure succeeded where disciplinary action had failed.

A major aspect of acceptance is sympathy, the ability to put ourselves in the other person's role and feel as he does. When we can do this we understand his behavior more fully. We see his aggression or his withdrawal in a different light and have a greater recognition that *our role is helping rather than controlling.* Understanding the causes of behavior is a part of acceptance.



Accepting a pupil also means that we listen patiently to him. His stories about himself and his family may be uninteresting and repetitive. We may have heard similar stories many times before from other pupils. But to accept him means that we listen wholeheartedly to his problems and his concerns. If we are really interested in him, his stories will always be new, even though we have been long familiar with the general pattern of his difficulties.

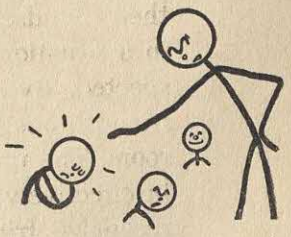
We can contribute to our students' feeling of acceptance in many ways:

(a) *Calling by name.* Every person likes the recognition that comes from having his name used. When we call youngsters by other than their first names, we create a situation in which no one is very close to anyone else. We keep up our guard. We restrict the opportunity to move to the type of living relationship with the youngster in which he will feel free to talk through his problems with us.

(b) *Responding to ideas.* Listening is not enough. Since learning occurs through the interaction of ideas, our teaching will be made most effective through our thoughtful response to pupil ideas.

(c) *Taking questions seriously.* Although some questions seem very naive to us, they are important to the pupils who ask them. Any question seems simple to a person who has already worked out the answer. Respecting the other person and working with him in such a way that we can help him grow requires that we accept his questions as being worthy of consideration.

(d) *Avoiding ridicule and sarcasm.* Respect for human personality is taught by example. If we ridicule individual students, we make clear to all that we do not respect the personalities of children. But by showing proper respect for each child, we increase the chance that the boys and girls with whom we work will respect each other.



(e) *Avoiding action that embarrasses.* When we embarrass a pupil, we split the group into two camps. All the members feel that they must take sides. They are forced either to defend the

injured person or to declare their allegiance to us. Such issues can be avoided if we take the misbehaving youngster aside and talk over with him the effect of his behavior on the group.

(f) *Encouraging friendliness.* By complimenting pupils on their acts of friendliness, we increase the friendliness in the group.

(g) *Welcoming children.* By welcoming new children into the group, we make it clear that friendliness and belonging are essential qualities of that group. As we plan with the members of our class how we can make new members feel at home, we show that all people belong and are wanted. We assure the newcomers that they are welcome, and at the same time we increase the security and acceptance of the other children.

(h) *Letting absentees know that they are missed.* When absentees know that they have been missed, they feel that they are making a contribution to the group. But when they return unnoticed, they gain the impression that no one cares whether they are part of the group or not.

(i) *Permitting students to choose their own seats.* If we assign seats arbitrarily, we make clear that the room is really our room and that the students are simply doing our bidding. But if we allow students to sit with their friends, we show that we are working with them in a situation in which friendship is valued and respected. By separating friends, we make clear that friendship is not a quality that we value in the classroom. The problem of what to do about cliques can be effectively handled after the children have come to recognize friendship as a positive value. Then the problem can be attacked by all the members of the group working together. The solution worked out by this method will be far more satisfactory than when the teacher sets out to destroy the cliques by seating

youngsters away from the people they would prefer to sit with.

(j) *Having the class work in committees.* As pupils have an opportunity to work closely together in small committees, friendships and sense of belonging increase.

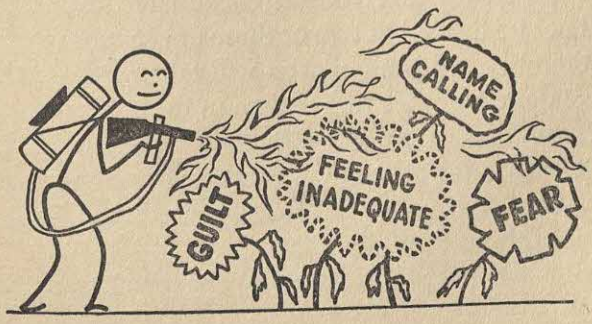
(k) *Stressing common qualities.* By emphasizing common interests, we decrease the importance of differences. Group unity is built around common purposes, interests, and beliefs. If differences are stressed, they loom so large that unity is never achieved.

(l) *Refraining from sending youngsters from the room.* When we send a youngster from the room, we decrease his self-respect and isolate him from the group. The effects of such isolation are particularly harmful to children who are already having difficulty getting along with others.

The behavior of the adult leader in the group determines to a great degree the pattern of living in the class. If we accept all pupils, we help create the conditions in which pupils will accept themselves and each other.

How Do We Help a Pupil Accept Himself?

To be emotionally healthy, every human being must think well of himself. Anyone who undermines a child's self-respect is not good for that child or society. When we make a child feel that he is unworthy, or that he cannot achieve, or that he is an unsatisfactory citizen in our society, we are failing in our responsibilities to him. We are destroying the foundation stone



of good human relations. We are taking the kind of action that makes it impossible for the child to accept and work with others because he is not sure of himself.

We build good human relations as we help a pupil accept himself. We help pupils accept themselves by doing the things which aid a pupil to recognize his achievements, decrease his fears, reduce his feelings of guilt, and lessen his financial insecurity.

How Do We Help a Pupil Know He Is Achieving?

Many classroom problems in human relations center around the teacher's concept of leadership. If we believe that a leader is a person who is superior to the other students, our attitude will color all the relationships within the class. Emphasis will be placed on being better than other people. Honor rolls will be posted on the bulletin board, and contests will be held to see which students can make the highest scores. Pupils will be strictly ranked from top to bottom of the class, and each one will know where he stands in the rank order. Emphasis will be placed on becoming a leader by beating someone else. Obviously, such an atmosphere restricts leadership to a very few pupils.

On the other hand, if we conceive of leadership as being any contribution that a boy or girl makes to establishing and carrying out group purposes, everyone has the chance to be a leader. Whenever a student shares a worth-while idea with the group or contributes a skill to the completion of a class project, he will manifest leadership. Everyone is encouraged to lead. Leadership will not be limited to two or three of the more gifted members of the class. All the children will take pride in the things they have done together rather than in the achievement of the superior members of the class. In fact, when leadership is restricted to only a few, the other class members frequently come to resent the activities of the teacher-appointed "elite" rather than take pride in their abilities.

Achievement under this broader concept of leadership is an

individual affair. To achieve, a pupil does not have to excel others. He is concerned with making better contributions than he has made in the past. Our task is to take the steps that will enable him to determine and evaluate his contribution. We do this by:

Helping each pupil and the group as a whole to determine the progress they are making. Procedures for helping pupils to collect evidence of progress will be discussed fully in the section on evaluation. At this point we need only note that it is our function to help each pupil determine his present status, the kind of growth he seeks, and ways of collecting evidence of growth to be used as a basis of judgment concerning the amount and quality of achievement. Evidence of growth is proof of achievement.

Giving encouragement at times of failure. All of us fail at times. Despite our best efforts we do not always measure up to the goals that we set for ourselves. We can perform a valuable service to youngsters if we let them know by a word of encouragement that we recognize that the going is tough and that the achievement has not been as great as they had hoped.

Making possible many kinds of achievement and recognition. By encouraging the class to recognize various kinds of contribution, we can assure that the efforts of each pupil will be noticed and valued.

Praising youngsters for their accomplishment. None of us receives enough praise. Frequently we are criticized for the things that we do not do, with little recognition of our contributions. We can help youngsters to gain a sense of achievement by praising them for the things that they have done well.

Varying standards for different individuals. Children's inclinations and abilities vary greatly. We cannot expect to devise a single set of achievement standards that will serve for all members of a class. Some students will never experience a sense of achievement simply because they will be

able to achieve the standards with almost no effort. Others, no matter how hard they try, will never be able to measure up to them. When a youngster has no hope of attaining the standards of achievement that have been established for the group, he begins to despair and to lose interest in his work.

If we use any system of determining achievement that labels some people as leaders and others as inadequate, we decrease the possibility of growth within the class. By using such a procedure, we lead many youngsters to feel that they have no contribution to make. They rebel against a situation and system that make it impossible for them to have a sense of achievement.

In a junior high school in Ohio there was a seventh-grade boy who was three years older and much bigger than the other members of his class. Still, he had a hard time keeping up with his classmates in academic activities. Moreover, his family was not well accepted in the community. Because of his size, he was able to excel at athletics and was capable of winning his way in any physical combat that occurred in the school. To compensate for the rejection of his family and his inability to attain the scholastic achievement of other members of his class, he was constantly making fun of the youngsters who were more studious than himself. He belittled all types of academic and social achievement. He took pride in the fact that he did not wear a necktie or a white shirt or a coat. He took great joy in hitting and shoving other youngsters who were superior in academic achievement and who did not accept him socially. Refusing the role of an inferior, he began a struggle to achieve a different type of social order in which his particular talents and abilities could function. Since his school and his teacher were inflexible, dropping out of school as soon as he reached the legal age to obtain working papers was the only course open through which he saw an opportunity to maintain his self-respect. His teacher and the school lost the opportunity to contribute to his development as a citizen as soon as he was sixteen.

How Can We Improve Human Relations in the Class?

How much of our adult insecurity and mental disturbance is due to a method of measuring achievement under which only a few can feel successful?

A sense of achievement and a feeling of personal worth are closely intertwined. If we want all pupils to develop self-respect, we will work for the kind of class organization where many different contributions are used and acknowledged, where each pupil maintains a record of his own progress, and where judgments are made by pupils, parents, and teacher in terms of standards appropriate to the status and ability of the individual student. If marks, which are only a way of reporting to parents, jeopardize the possibility that all can feel worthy, we face the task of devising new ways of sharing with pupils and parents the evaluation of pupil work. The chapters on evaluation will suggest techniques for helping pupils and parents determine pupil achievement.

How Do We Decrease Pupil Fears?

Fear eats away at our sense of personal worth. It decreases our self-confidence and our trust in others. It forces us into a defensive position and makes constructive forward steps difficult. If the fear is great enough it brings regression.

Our world is one in which many adults are afraid—afraid of death, ghosts, atomic bombs, hunger, snakes, high places. The list is endless. How much more children face! They encounter these fears in adults and are affected by them. In addition, they face the special fears associated with their period of development—fear about physical changes occurring in themselves, fear of not being normal, fear of being left out, fear of failure.

> An anecdote reported in the *Reader's Digest* tells of a girl who was sitting on a high-school stage in Washington, D.C., about to give a valedictory address. She was shaking, very much embarrassed and afraid. The man sitting next to her noticed her fright and leaned over and whispered, "I'm scared too." He was the principal speaker of the evening, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

He put the girl at ease by letting her know that he was tense too, but that both of them could go ahead and face the situation that confronted them.

We can help pupils by letting them know that we too have concerns, that we understand how they feel, that we are willing to talk over their disturbances with them. Children are less fearful when they know they can turn to grown-ups for help. Of course, they don't want help unless they ask for it, but they like to have the assurance that help is there when they need it.

We help, moreover, as we assist them to concentrate on solving the problems of the immediate present rather than anticipating the dreadful things that may occur. As we enable them to meet current difficulties successfully they form the strength, courage, and skill to face new problems as they arise. In some cases, preparation for future possibilities, such as fires, or atomic explosions, must be undertaken in schools. But we can use even these grim exercises to build up security and assurance if we conduct them coolly and unemotionally.

Protection of youngsters from physical violence is essential to decreasing fear. When smaller pupils are beaten by large ones or threatened with bodily harm by a pupil gang, we are forced to take action. We may bring the situation to the group for decision if it is within the class. Or the student government may be the agency to which the problem is referred if the pupils involved are from different groups. As we work with pupils in reaching a solution, our function is to increase the concern of all for their fellows and to encourage older youngsters to assume responsibility for smaller ones. But in the process we do what we must to protect the weak from aggression.

Unless we are sensitive, our own behavior may increase pupil fearfulness and insecurity. Do we utilize their fears as an easy means of motivation? Do we threaten them with failure or with punishment? Such phrases as, "I don't want to mention any names, but some of you will repeat this grade next year unless you show improvement," are destructive threats to the peace of mind of a large proportion of the class. Constant scrutiny of

the way we make assignments, counsel, or discuss disorder is essential if we are to keep threats and fear-inciting words from our comments.

Being willing to listen and share their concerns, helping solve immediate problems, facing realistically and unemotionally the necessity for preparing for crises, protecting from physical violence and avoiding the use of fear as motivation, are all steps we can take to decrease pupil fears.

How Do We Decrease Pupil Feelings of Guilt?

A person with guilt feelings is unable to believe in his own worth and thus is less secure in his relations with others. If we take action that increases a child's sense of guilt, we hurt him and hinder the development of good human relations in the class.

Guilt is appropriate only when the person who performs an act is aware of the other ways in which he might have behaved. Youngsters are often unaware of these other possibilities and react in the only way they know to a given situation. Some teachers, who do know of alternate ways of behavior, are horrified and seek to instill in the children a feeling of guilt so that they will not behave in such a manner again. Such action is detrimental to the child's mental health. Making a youngster feel ashamed is appropriate only when he has had an opportunity to consider possible ways of behaving in the situation, has decided that some ways are more satisfactory than others, and yet has acted contrary to his decisions.

Throughout the consideration of behavior that we think is unsatisfactory, we can be constructive if we stress the desirability of examining several courses of action and deciding which is the most intelligent choice. If we help the pupil to see several possible procedures and allow the choice to remain his, we provide the opportunity for him to change his behavior and still maintain his self-respect.

Guilt feelings are decreased as we emphasize a pupil's socially acceptable behavior. We make a positive contribution to

his well-being as we help him see within himself the qualities that respected people have. When the emphasis is placed on the qualities that he has that are different and unacceptable, he begins to lose hope that he can become like the respected members of the community and begins to adopt other ways of behaving to get attention. It should be noted that the persons respected vary from community to community and from age-group to age-group. A part of our task is finding the kinds of persons all can agree are respected.

If we are shocked by a pupil's activities, language, or dress, we avoid letting him know it.

> A psychologist and a teacher were walking through an Alabama school. As they passed, a seven-year-old youngster held out a picture that he had drawn, a picture that he considered obscene. The psychologist took it, looked at it, made a passing comment, and handed it back to the youngster. He had not displayed any disgust, any horror, or any indication that the picture was out of the ordinary. He had not added to the youngster's guilt-feelings, nor had he given him the satisfaction of knowing that he had been successful in shocking adults.

A pupil's behavior is objective evidence that we use in deciding how we should work with him. Our job is not to judge or to punish, but to study each child and to work with him in such a way that he can grow in self-respect and wisdom. Whenever we're in doubt about how to proceed in a situation, we may ask ourselves this question: "What course of action will give me the best opportunity to work with this child again?" If our behavior causes a pupil to lose faith in us, to resent us, to fear us, or to feel rejected by us, we have little chance of helping him. When we want help or counsel, we go to the persons who accept us and who have faith in our potentialities. So do pupils!

We increase guilt feelings if we set standards so high that few children attain them. Boys and girls who want to do what is right and socially desirable find themselves unable to do so,

through no fault of their own. If we want to make it possible for all children to feel worthy, we formulate with them standards suitable to their ability and purposes.

We can stress pride in one's family, nationality, and cultural group. When we find that some members of our class feel less worthy because they belong to a minority group of that particular community in which they live, we can take the lead in demonstrating respect for the group and gratitude for the contribution they have made. We can let students know we oppose name-calling and labeling of groups and recommend that they include a prohibition of such action in their code of behavior.

How Do We Decrease Insecurity Created by Financial Status?

To the extent that the school emphasizes economic differences among pupils, it increases the insecurity of children whose families do not have economic stability. Recent studies have shown in high schools, particularly, that many hidden costs tend to cause youngsters from lower economic levels to drop out of school sooner than others. Even those who remain find themselves handicapped unless we exercise leadership in reducing the number of situations in which inadequate finances cause a pupil to feel different or embarrassed.

We can provide economic assistance without advertising it. If we do provide free lunches or free glasses, or other types of aid, students who receive such aid should not be made known to the other students. Lack of ability to pay is no fault of the youngster, and he should not be penalized by his peers because he does not have the financial backing to purchase all the equipment that is needed in the school. In one school in Ohio, free lunch cards were supplied to youngsters who could not afford to pay for their lunches. But the free lunch cards were yellow, while those that were paid for were green. Each time they went through the lunch line, the youngsters who could not afford lunch were forced to advertise the fact that they were different, that they were recipients of charity. The empha-

sis was on pointing out the differences rather than on decreasing them. It is not surprising that a large number of the pupils unable to afford lunch cards chose to stay in the study hall without lunch rather than carry the yellow card through the cafeteria line. Other schools have handled this problem by giving free lunch cards that are exactly like the lunch cards that are purchased.

We can encourage youngsters to dress sensibly and inexpensively. When the youngsters in a class dress in a manner that all can afford, those who come from homes in which money is not plentiful have an opportunity to be working members of the group without feeling the insecurity that comes from having clothing that is not like that of other boys and girls.

We can eliminate special Christmas gifts for the teacher. If we teach in a school in which giving presents is the custom, we can insist on being a member of the group and having our name drawn by lot with the same price limit on our present as on the others.

We can decrease extra fees. Requiring extra money for papers, laboratory fees, and activity fees emphasizes economic differences.

We can assure pupils that economic handicaps can be overcome. By bringing to the class stories and illustrations of youngsters who have succeeded, we increase the belief of each class member that he can achieve success in our American society with or without financial backing. This type of assurance is important for the mental health of some boys and girls.

We can work with students in such a way that those with superior socio-economic status do not dominate the group. By encouraging all members of the group, no matter what their background is, to use and develop their leadership talents, we build up acceptance of a way of life in which leadership is the reward of ability rather than the prerogative of status. The children will gradually learn that true leadership depends on an individual's contribution to the group, not on his official or social position.

How Do We Help Pupils Accept Each Other?

The third phase of promoting good human relations is to help pupils accept each other.

Many times it is more difficult to get persons to accept each other than it is for us to accept them ourselves. If the youngsters come from a community that has sharp cleavages between nationalities, races, and religions, community attitudes of intolerance and distrust are brought into the classroom and affect relations among members of the class.

Some teachers have tried to promote acceptance by having the class study the cultural and national backgrounds of various groups within the class. They have assumed that knowledge and acceptance are synonymous! Often, however, this procedure has resulted in an overdevelopment of national pride and a heightened antagonism rather than in a greater understanding among the groups, as the teacher had intended.

Acceptance is more than gaining knowledge about someone. It develops through recognizing common goals and sharing attempts to reach them.

We can't tell students what to think of one another. If we try they may decide to act in just the opposite way.

> A new pupil entered a New York City junior high school from a private school in Chicago. On his way home from school the first day, he was attacked by the boys in class because he had come from Chicago. On the second day, he was beaten by the same group because he had come from a private school. They did not feel that he was a typical American boy and wanted to prove to him that he would have to earn his spurs before he would be accepted in this particular neighborhood of New York City. A few days later, the class began to discuss how wool was produced. The new boy, having been in the Midwest where sheep were raised, knew much about the subject. In the class discussion, when he had an opportunity, he described the shearing process. After he had finished, the teacher called him to the front of the room in an obvious attempt to help him gain acceptance in the group. She put her

arm around his shoulders and commended him highly for having contributed so much to the class from his study and experience. On the way home that afternoon the boy was once again slugged by his fellow classmates because of the teacher's demonstration of approval.

By such an obvious attempt to direct the attitudes of the class, the teacher succeeded only in increasing the new boy's isolation.

However, by proceeding carefully and sensitively, a teacher can often arouse the concern of the class for a child who is having difficulty in finding his place in the group.

A new youngster from out-of-state joined a first-grade class in a Florida elementary school. It was a large school, over a thousand children, and the boy was insecure in the new situation. He found a type of teaching that was strange to him. He was permitted less freedom and was expected to remain more quiet than had been customary in the kindergarten that he had attended. He rebelled. He began to play hookey. He was absent three days in a row. Finally, the teacher decided that she would try to improve the situation for this one boy. *She approached the problem by inviting the class to help work out the solution.* While the new boy was still absent, she asked the other children to think about what they could do to help him feel at home in the class. They responded to her appeal. In their attempts to help, they succeeded in developing better human relations among all members of the group. The new boy was made to feel welcome and accepted, and at the same time the children's new awareness of the feelings of other people led to a classroom situation that was more satisfying for them all.

The class cannot function effectively as a group if any of its members are emotionally disturbed. Strong emphasis during the early stages of class activity on the effective functioning of the group will help students to become concerned about the welfare of others.

One way of helping pupils understand how the other person

feels is to have them play out the incidents of conflict within their group.

> Two third-grade boys started an argument over a cowboy lasso. Soon other youngsters gathered around and began to encourage each of the protagonists to stand up for his rights. Both boys, beginning to feel that their honor and the honor of those yelling for them were at stake, crowded closer together until one accidentally touched the other. The fight was on.
>
> The teacher came around the corner of the building, saw the struggle, walked over, took each boy by the shoulder, and asked them to tell her what was happening. Through their tears, for both had become angry and hurt, each told his story. Other pupils added bits of information. The teacher asked the boys if they would try an experiment. When they agreed, perhaps as a way of avoiding punishment, the class was requested to sit down in a circle and then the teacher asked the fighters to go back to the beginning of the disagreement. She had them trace the development of the argument up to the point when the first blow had been struck. She had each boy tell how he felt at each stage of the argument and also asked the bystanders to describe their feelings.
>
> Then the teacher asked each boy to play the role of his opponent while they went through the scene again. Once more the boys were asked to tell how they felt, but this time each was finding out how his opponent had felt. The entire group joined in the discussion and sought to suggest how a fight could have been avoided in a way that would have satisfied both disputants.

The technique described is a simple form of a psycho-drama. The participants in the real-life situation act out their roles in the play situation and interpret their feelings. After each has played his own part, the roles are reversed and each person plays the part of his opponent.

The role-playing can be carried a step further by having two other pupils play the same roles. Each pupil is asked to explain

his feelings and his emotional reactions as the situation develops. Seeing the dispute acted out in this way, the original participants become aware of factors in the situation that they had not recognized before. They gain a greater understanding of how the other person felt. They have a chance to see themselves as others see them. When all the members of the group have shared in one another's emotional reactions, they are ready to suggest more effective ways of dealing with similar problems. Then these suggestions of better ways of behaving can be acted out, and the whole class will have had an opportunity to become involved in meeting a human relations problem.

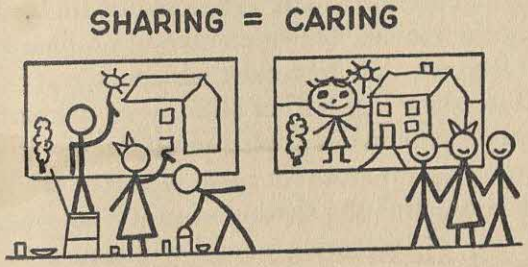
> At the high-school level a social studies class, studying labor management relations, staged the following socio-drama.
>
> The son of a manufacturer was cast in the role of a labor leader and the son of a union member played the role of an industrial leader in a negotiation situation. Both pupils, as well as the rest of the class, gained insight through their roles into the values and techniques of groups toward which they might not formerly have been sympathetic.

Evidence continues to mount that the simple acquisition of facts does not promote understanding. We attain understanding as we have opportunities to experience as fully as possible the reactions of others in given social situations. The alert teacher will seek constantly to devise ways of helping his students to feel and to respond to social situations in roles other than those to which they are accustomed.

If we assume that nothing can be done to help people learn to understand each other, little progress is made. If, on the other hand, we give students an opportunity to put themselves in the place of the persons with whom they usually disagree, social sensitivity is increased through a widening of experience.

From these first steps in becoming concerned about others, members of the class can gradually move on to a real understanding of one another. They will develop this understanding

through sharing experiences, through bringing hobbies and personal projects to class, through taking part in social activities, and through talking out together individual and group problems. As they share their interests, they will begin to accept and to want to help one another. *When people share, they*



care, not only about the outcome of a particular project but about the people who have been involved in making the project successful.

How Do We Encourage Pupils To Help Each Other?

As indicated in the story of the first-grade boy who entered a new school, one aspect of accepting another person is being concerned about his welfare and being willing to help him. We can promote a desire to help each other in the members of our class by the way in which we work.

If we want pupils to help each other, we provide many opportunities for them to work, play, and think together. We use class committees. We suggest that pupils undertake projects together. We recommend that less skilled pupils ask the more skilled to help them.

> In a Michigan high school an English workshop has been established. Student volunteers from the study hall come to the workshop and serve as coaches and counselors for other students desiring help with their English work. Students are encouraged to help each other—not penalized or punished for doing so.

This practice can be utilized in our classrooms. The more advanced pupils can be of service to the other students if we encourage them to help. And the roles will change constantly. One student will be superior in one area while another will lead in a different phase of the work.

We also promote a sense of responsibility for each other by encouraging children to share. When we invite them to share trips, books, the movies, television shows, problems, joys, successes, and sorrows, they increase their concern for each other. Time spent in "show and tell" or other types of sharing periods serves a real purpose in developing pupil interest in each other as well as opening up areas for more intensive study.

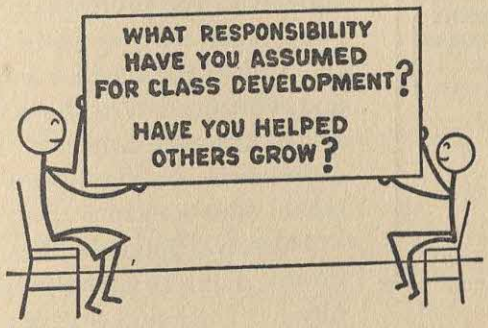
Using class time for the sharing of problems when they desire it is a way of increasing pupils' willingness to help each other. At first, pupils may hesitate to bring their concerns to the group—particularly if they are older boys and girls. We make it easier for them to seek the help of the group if we let them know that we don't have all the answers either, that we are still seeking for answers to problems in our own life, some that are recurrent and some that are new. When pupils understand that we are still facing and attempting to solve problems, they are freer to share their concerns.

As we open the class period for pupils to use in seeking solutions to their problems and to do the things that free them from fear of ridicule, we are taking positive steps to create the type of situation in which the group members begin to seek help from each other.

We further stimulate pupils to help each other if, during the evaluation conferences we hold with individual students, we ask such questions as:

Which students have been most helpful to you? Why?
What materials have you brought for others to use?
Which students have you helped?
What have you done to help the class?
What additional things could you have done to help each other?

In the classroom we have the opportunity to share in the creation of an environment where the pattern of living is such that people are valued because they help one another. The values we accept grow out of the way we live day by day.



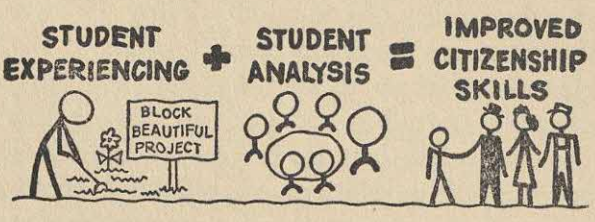
What Is Our Out-of-Class Responsibility in Improving Human Relations?

Our concern cannot stop with how well youngsters accept one another in the classroom, however. The school is not an isolated unit. The quality of school living is determined in large measure by the quality of community living. If hatred, prejudice, and conflict are dominant characteristics of the community, the learning that pupils acquire from participation in the community will contradict and perhaps outweigh what they learn in the classroom situation. If we are genuinely concerned with improving human relations, we will take steps to cooperate with others in the community who are working for the same goal.

Our first step in working for improved human relations outside the classroom is to encourage the faculty of the school to be concerned with the improvement of community living. In faculty meetings we advocate that the school become a community school with the facilities and personnel of the school available as community resources. No teacher can work effectively alone. His contribution becomes significant when all the members of the faculty begin to show concern for community improvement.

Second, we become a participant in community organizations and community councils dedicated to the welfare of the age-group with which we are working. Once the combined agencies of the community begin to work with the problems of youth, the educational environment improves and the work of the school is supplemented and enhanced. No longer does the school compete with the educational experiences of youngsters in out-of-school situations.

Third, we increase the opportunity for our pupils to participate in community activities and analyze the human relations found. If students have the kind of experiences which involve observing and participating in community activities as a part of their school work and analyze these experiences and draw their own conclusions, living in both the community and the school can be improved. The important features are *student experiencing* and *student analysis*. We help people improve their values and human relations through their analysis of ways of living and the values implicit in them.



SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Learn the name, background, likes, dislikes, interests, and purposes of each pupil.
2. Try to understand why a pupil feels as he does.
3. Try to examine pupil behavior objectively.

4. Be willing for a pupil to express his feelings.
5. Give pupils an opportunity to put themselves in the place of persons with whom they disagree.
6. Put pupil welfare above winning an argument with him.
7. Listen to a student's stories about himself.
8. Call students by name.
9. Respond to pupil ideas.
10. Take pupil questions seriously.
11. Avoid ridicule, sarcasm, and other actions that embarrass students.
12. Be friendly and encourage friendliness.
13. Welcome new children to the group.
14. Let children know they are missed when they have been absent.
15. Give pupils an opportunity to choose their seating arrangements.
16. Stress qualities held in common in the group.
17. Avoid sending pupils from the room.
18. Believe that all pupils can exert some type of leadership.
19. Strive to help each pupil gain a sense of achievement.
20. Make possible many kinds of achievement and recognition.
21. Vary standards to individual abilities.
22. Give encouragement when a pupil experiences failure.
23. Give praise for accomplishment.
24. Help each pupil record his progress.
25. Take a course of action that makes possible working with the child in the future.
26. Help a pupil solve present problems instead of worrying about the future.
27. Let pupils know you are willing to talk through problems.
28. Protect youngsters from physical violence of older pupils.
29. As far as possible, eliminate fear as a motivating technique.
30. Stress the socially acceptable phases of a child's behavior.

31. Decrease fees for school activities as far as possible.

32. Provide economic assistance where needed without letting other pupils know.

33. Oppose name-calling and labeling of minority groups.

34. Take the lead in recognizing contributions of minority groups.

35. Use socio-dramas to help pupils gain greater understanding of the feelings of others.

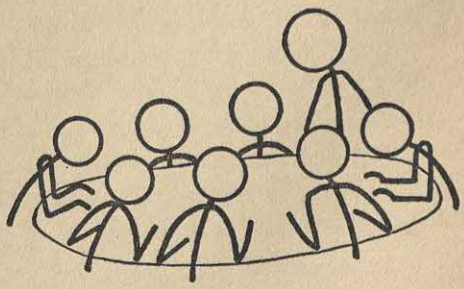
36. In evaluation, ask the individual how he has helped others grow.

37. Encourage the faculty to become concerned about improving human relations in the community.

38. Give pupils the opportunity to apply the generalizations they have drawn about human relations to the organization and operation of the community.

39. Participate in community organizations working for welfare of the age-group taught.

Teaching Is Skill in Group Work



Chapter 5

How To Use Group Work

Out of our greater understanding of human development and the learning process has come a recognition of the importance of group work in the classroom. We know that effective group processes create a healthy emotional climate, increase the pupil's enjoyment and sense of belonging, make it possible for pupils to learn from one another, and teach important democratic skills. Efficient learning for pupils depends upon our skill in group work.

Effective use of group procedures requires an understanding of group work, a willingness to *work with* pupils, an ability to win the acceptance of pupils, and a knowledge of the pitfalls of group work.

What Is Group Work?

Effective group work means working in a group—not on it! As long as we conceive of our function as directing students to do what we want them to do, we are not using group-work techniques.

When we use group work, we become a member of the group as quickly as we can. We invite students to share the planning with us. We seek the establishment of common purposes. We develop an organization through which students can participate in the administration of the class. We stimulate the emergence of other leadership. We encourage each member to accept other members and to feel a responsibility for helping them. We bring all members in on the evaluation of activities and accomplishments.

In a real group situation, everyone participates in both the planning and in the evaluation. We may suggest things that might be done and possible ways of doing them, but the final decisions rest with the total group, *including us as teacher.* Students look upon us as just another member of the group, with voting power but not veto power. The way we work with the group determines how much respect and authority our viewpoints and suggestions will command.

Ordinarily, pupils will not express a desire to take part in the planning. They don't expect to.

Only through a period of encouragement can we get boys and girls who have been conditioned to teacher domination to move to the place where they are willing to say, "This is what seems important to me in terms of my purposes and in terms of what I hope to become."

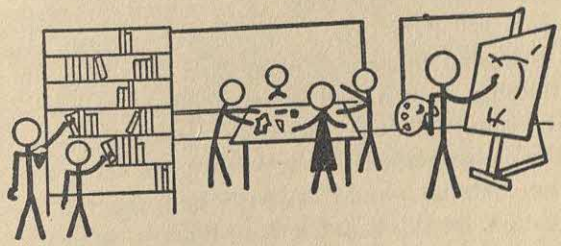
A class becomes a group as it recognizes common interests and establishes common purposes. When teacher purposes and pupil purposes conflict, no group exists. When individuals within the class do not agree on the activities to be undertaken or the achievement sought, a group has not emerged. The use of "we" is an indication of group feeling. But when the members of a class continue to say "I" did this, or "I" will do that, they are still thinking in exclusively individual terms. When we have helped the class achieve the feeling that "we" are going to do this and "we" are going to do that, groupness has begun.

In group work, the class is organized to facilitate pupil participation in the policy-making and the administration of the class. As long as we preside at all class meetings, establish the schedule, appoint all committees, direct all activities, make decisions about materials, procedures, and work locations, and judge all products, group work is not under way. It is teacher direction of a class—pure and unadulterated.

In a true group situation, *the leadership shifts.* Although at the beginning it may rest largely with the teacher, as the group grows more mature and becomes more definite in its direction

and plan of action, the leadership will shift from person to person in accordance with the contributions that various members of the group can make. Anyone who contributes to the improvement of the group or to the achievement of group purposes becomes at the moment of making the contribution the leader of the group. We accept this fact and promote its acceptance by the students.

Group work makes possible many types of leadership. When the whole class is required to work under the immediate direction of the teacher, only a few pupils can lead. The others are forced into following roles. The only acceptable type of leadership is that which contributes to carrying on the project which the teacher has chosen. But as we move into genuine group work, many types of contributions can be accepted. Once the class has agreed on a project, several groups may be working simultaneously on various phases of it. More pupils have an opportunity to serve in the capacity of leaders.



In group work, members accept one another and assume a responsibility for the success of all group members. A class where pupils are trying to be successful at the expense of others is not a group. A class divided into conflicting factions is not a group.

In a group situation *cooperation is encouraged.* Boys and girls are encouraged to think together about what can be done and how it should be done. Each is encouraged to consider the contribution that he can make to the group and its members.

Group work involves participation of the total membership in evaluating process and results. If the teacher alone decides

whether the procedures used have been good and the results satisfactory, group work is incomplete.

Let's look at the way group work functions in a class.

> A sophomore biology class in a southern high school was discussing diseases. They found that 50 per cent of the class had had malaria. Shocked, they decided to undertake a study of the disease, its causes and possible preventive measures.
>
> At first, the teacher assumed leadership in defining the problem and in suggesting various methods of attack. After talking the project through, the members of the class decided that they would begin interviewing various citizens in the town in order to get the facts on the extent of malaria in their town —the health department did not have the information. One student, who was skilled in the communication arts, volunteered to help train the interviewers in the most effective techniques of drawing forth information. When the interviewers had returned with their findings, the best mathematician in the class assumed leadership of a committee responsible for organizing the data into a meaningful pattern. Another student, interested in politics, suggested that they should make their findings known and recommended submitting them to the city council. After discussing the desirability of such a step, the class decided that it was a good idea. But first, they felt, the material would have to be prepared for effective presentation. At this point, other students, with experience in drawing and lettering, offered to work out graphs and illustrations of the group's conclusions and proposals. Then the students selected their most eloquent speaker to make the actual presentation to the council. After the council had listened but taken no action, the teacher raised the questions that caused the group to evaluate the results of their efforts.

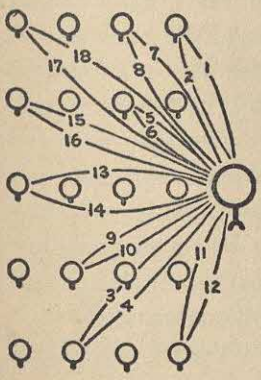
All during this project, one student after another had assumed leadership as successive group needs became evident. The teacher stood ready to offer assistance, but his greatest contribution had been in helping the group to uncover and develop its own potentials for leadership.

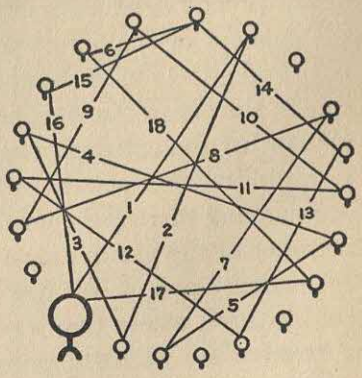
Effective group work is built upon group decision and division of work.

> A sixth-grade class was studying various theories of the origin of the earth. As long as the study was limited to reading books and listening to the teacher's explanations, only a few pupils were really enthusiastic. But when the class decided to portray the theories in a "movie" made of a roll of wallpaper, a box, and two broomsticks, all the students became deeply interested. Some prepared the script. Others laid out the rough sketches on the back of the wallpaper. Some painted the pictures. Some measured and cut the box and fitted the broomsticks. All were giving their best to make the project successful. All were involved in some aspect of the group undertaking. All were learning. All evolved some theory of the earth's formation, along with other learnings. No two pupils learned the same things. That would be impossible!

Group work increases the opportunities for all pupils to learn. Different stimuli are meaningful to different people. The explanation or symbol that has meaning for one pupil will not have significance for another. We increase the chance for all to learn by increasing the variety of stimuli present in a situation.

As we recognize that individuals, because of different backgrounds, get their motivation and their learning from different types of interactions and experiences, we see the desirability of creating the type of situation in which the number of inter-





actions will be multiplied. As we move from a teacher-dominated situation where the dialogue is teacher-pupil-teacher-pupil to a group-centered situation where the interaction may be between any members of the group, the possible interactions are multiplied.

Some teachers feel that they are promoting group work when they divide the class into groups that work by themselves. In the elementary school particularly, many teachers have believed that group work consists of dividing the class into certain reading-level groups, perhaps named the "Blackbirds," the "Bluebirds," and the "Bluejays." While the teacher is hearing one group read aloud, the other students read silently at their desks, or draw, or work on some other phase of the school program. This teaching method does not bring into play all the possibilities and values of true group work. It does not encourage students to develop a feeling of belonging, a feeling of accepting, or a feeling of helping other people. It does not develop self-direction or self-control. It is simply a device that enables the teacher to keep a certain number of students quiet while he works with the others. This practice may be necessary but it is not group work.

In summary, we are not using group work when we manipulate people to get them to do what we want. We are still the one who has the purposes and the responsibilities. Dictation to the group or manipulation of the group are unsatisfactory group procedures and inefficient teaching. First, they oppose the concept of democracy as a way of living. We can't expect boys and girls to learn democracy as they live within a dictatorship in the classroom. Second, domination by the teacher weakens, rather than strengthens, individuals. As we take away responsibility from people and make the decisions for them, we are denying them the chance to grow. We weaken every other member of the group as we cause them to be more and more dependent upon us. We help them grow most when we provide the situation where they can take more responsibility.

Neither are we using group work when we work *for* a class.

If we have no voice in decision-making and confine our activities to running errands and collecting materials, we are not a full-fledged group member. If we accept this role, we are in the position of not exerting leadership. We revert to a servant's status with only a servant's chance of being able to help the people grow.

But when we work within the group, we share decision-making, responsibility, and the authority we have. We establish working relationships with boys and girls that make it possible for them to assume responsibility for their own growth and self-direction. And, at the same time, we retain our proper responsibility for the class operation.

What Working Relationship with Pupils Do We Want?

Sharing leadership with children may seem to be a dangerous and difficult undertaking. We don't want to lose the respect of pupils. We don't want the class to run wild, without control. What kind of relationship between teacher and pupils permits shared leadership and shared authority? What kind of working relationship with pupils do we want?

One step in deciding how we want to work with pupils is to identify some of the relationships that we do *not* want to establish with them.

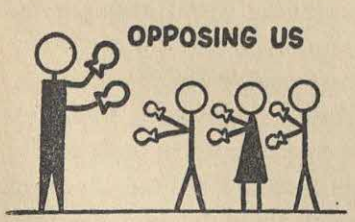
We don't want them to do things simply because we tell them to. If we tell students to do something that turns out unprofitably or unsuccessfully, they blame us. If we initiate every project, we must expect to be held responsible for the ultimate success of every project. And, as stated previously, such behavior on our part robs pupils of the opportunity to mature. By jealously guarding the right to make decisions we cut them off from the experiences that will permit them to become self-directing persons.

We don't want pupils to be afraid of us. Children who fear us cannot learn efficiently with us because they are afraid to tell us the kinds of help that they need. They are afraid to make

the mistakes through which they can grow, because they fear that we will not understand, that we will not be helpful, that we will punish them. Fear is a motivating force, but it is not the kind of motivation that makes it possible for the person who engenders it to provide guidance for the individual involved. The teacher who motivates by fear can only serve as a driving force; he cannot help youngsters explore and resolve the conflicts that exist within them.

Neither do we want a situation in which students are controlling us. We have a responsibility for the way in which a class is conducted. If we permit certain students in the class to gain control of the situation and tell us what to do, we abandon that responsibility. We can no longer perform the function that our position demands.

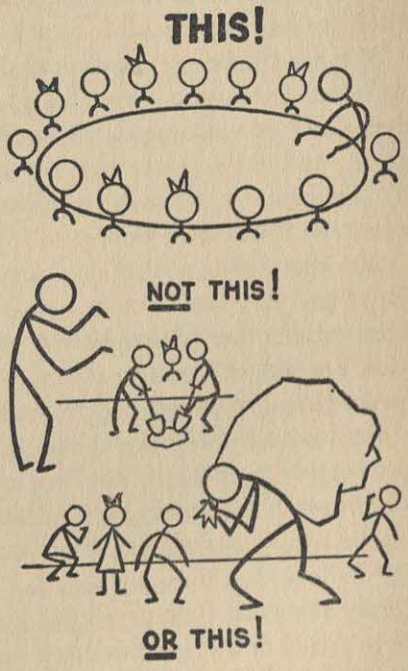
We don't want a situation in which students are in opposition to us. When students line up against us, we are in the position of having to win, and when we have to win we decrease our chances of working with the people that we defeat. Defeated persons may resent and even hate the winner. As the classroom situation becomes one of struggle between us and the students, it is not one that is conducive to students' analyzing with us the types of help that they need, nor does it provide the experiences that will bring about desired improvement. It becomes, instead, a situation in which we use all the manipulative techniques that we have at our command to get students to do the things that we believe are important to do.



It becomes a battlefield and a game to see which one can put something over on the other.

These are relationships, then, that we *don't* want to develop. Let's turn now to other ways of working with children that seem more desirable.

We want to work in situations marked by mutual trust and respect, in which we believe in the worth of the students, and they in turn believe in our good faith and abilities. We want a situation in which pupils and teacher help each other, where they talk out problems together and can depend upon each other. We want the classroom to be a place in which everyone will feel free to share ideas, materials, and problems. How can we develop such a working relationship?



Suggestions for achieving desirable relationships have been made in the chapters dealing with human relations in the classroom. Additional recommendations will be made in the remainder of this chapter and the two following.

How Much Faith Is Necessary?

One of the functions of leadership is to have faith in the people who comprise the group. Sometimes it's hard for a teacher to have such faith. It's hard to see how a group of boys and girls who have not had previous experience in self-direction,

who seem very immature, who do not appear to have any worth-while purposes or values, can be persons in whom we can have faith. But faith is necessary. If we don't believe in them, we can never expect them to believe in themselves.

How much faith must we have?

We must believe that each student in our class is important. This is a basic faith in democracy. Denial of the importance of each student is a denial in practice of our belief in democracy.

We must believe that each child has a potential contribution to make. Otherwise, we will find ourselves shutting him out or ignoring him or doing the things in the class that will cause the other students to leave him out or to ignore his contributions. It is our job to search for each youngster's contribution as we guide and plan with him.

We must believe that each child has worth-while purposes. Boys and girls are human beings with the drives and the instincts that other human beings have. They have some purposes that are judged good in our society and they have other purposes that are judged bad. The classroom provides us with the opportunity to help boys and girls to implement their socially acceptable purposes. They will make mistakes along the way, of course. Otherwise, schools would be unnecessary.

We must believe, too, that each child can improve. Unless we believe that improvement is possible, education becomes a farce. We must believe that if we have sufficient skill, we can help the child to improve his values, his ways of working, and his skill in living with others.

We must believe that each pupil wants to belong and will work with others as soon as he feels that he does belong. As far as we can determine, it is a basic aspect of human nature to want to be a part of the social group. When we realize that a child is sincere in his attempts to win membership in the group, our teaching will become a process of helping him discover the most effective techniques. We will certainly not lose faith in him when he first enters our group for not already having developed skills in working with others.

We must believe that boys and girls can be trusted. People tend to live up to what other people expect of them. If we show distrust of a child, we encourage him to become untrustworthy. But if we believe in his trustworthiness, we set standards that make it very difficult for him to deny the faith we have in him.

We must believe that each student will live up to the best that he knows. We can be sure of this. No student wants to be labeled "unsatisfactory." Often he will do things that appear unsatisfactory simply because he does not know the most satisfactory means of achieving his goals. One of our functions is to help him set higher standards for himself, to help him develop concepts of the good life that will cause him to aim a little higher than when he first came to the class.

These are the essential faiths of an effective teacher in the purposes and potential of the pupils with whom he works.

How Important Is the Group's Acceptance of Us?

Many teachers are not accepted by the classes with which they work. And they don't care. They don't believe acceptance is important. All they are concerned about is that pupils do as they are told and remain relatively quiet. When they have achieved this "discipline" and when their classes do the assigned work, these teachers feel that they are successful. Obviously, we cannot stop at such a low level of acceptance if we are to be effective teachers. It is not by chance that youngsters in such classes fight on their way home and tease their more vulnerable classmates. They are simply turning the aggression they feel toward their teacher against their fellow students.

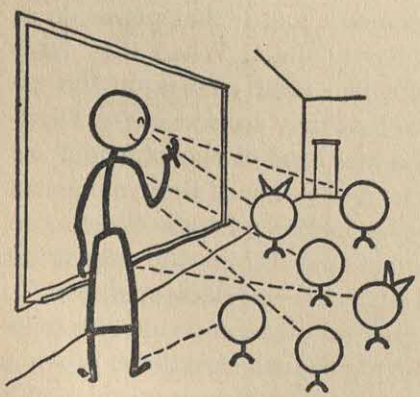
The pupils' refusal to share their problems and concerns with the teacher is another characteristic of such situations. When a teacher states that neither he nor his class has any problems or worries, he is revealing that he is so far outside the group that pupils are afraid to trust him. All children have problems, but they keep them to themselves when they do not think that adults are concerned or when adults refuse to listen or attempt to control their behavior and thinking by force or sarcasm. Stu-

dents don't reveal their really important experiences to the teacher in such an atmosphere.

If we want our teaching to make a real difference in the lives and behavior of pupils, we must establish the kind of relationship with them that makes it possible for them to trust us, to confide in us, to argue with us, and to question us. They must accept us as a person who likes them, is concerned with their problems, is willing to plan with them, has faith in them, wants them to be happy, shares successes and disappointments with them, and recognizes their mistakes for what they are. In short, we must work with them rather than try to direct them into our preconceived patterns.

How To Win Group Acceptance

As we walk into a classroom for the first time, we are "sized up" and evaluated by all the members of the group, especially if we are new in the system and the students have had no reports from their predecessors about what kind of person we are.



Of course, if we have taught in the school before, our chances for success are either enhanced or decreased by the reputation we've made for ourselves. If previous students have found us to be a satisfactory person to work with, our task of winning the acceptance of a new group will not be hard. But if we have a name for being a nagger, a disagreeable person, a tyrant, or an inefficient worker, our hopes for winning acceptance by the group are greatly decreased.

As we undergo this first trial, we find that certain things may hinder our winning acceptance by the class. If we attempt to bluff our way by being very strict and by making an example

of the first pupil who steps out of line, we create an undesirable relationship that we will have to overcome later. If we attempt to be exceedingly friendly, we risk losing the students' respect. Students welcome evidence of the teacher's willingness to be friendly but they resent synthetic, elaborate displays of friendship. They know that friendship develops as a result of shared experiences that bring about mutual respect.

In beginning to work with students, we should attempt to create the kind of situation in which they will feel free to express their personal reactions. As people are free to say what they think, their comments will guide us in deciding on what steps we should take to win acceptance in the group.

Boys and girls must feel that they have independence. This is particularly true at the high-school age. Whenever we attempt to crowd students into accepting our plans, we force them either to abandon their self-respect or to rebel. If we draw the battleline so that rebellion is the only respectable course, we can't win acceptance by the group. We may win respect based on fear, but we won't be accepted as a member of the group. If we want to be a working member of the group, we must begin to work with the class in such a way that we make clear to them that the class is theirs, as well as ours, that we want help in planning how class experiences can be conducted most effectively.

We cannot win acceptance unless we have faith in the youngsters with whom we work. *Acceptance means mutual faith,* and faith on the part of students does not come until we have shown them that we have the faith in them described previously. This faith can be shown in numerous ways. It is demonstrated by expecting the best from students as we begin to

work with them, by refraining from making comments about unsatisfactory past performance, by looking for the good things they do rather than for things to stop them from doing, by encouraging them to work together rather than attempting to isolate them from each other, by allowing them to sit and work with the people they like to work with. Faith is the most powerful tool we have in winning acceptance and in working with boys and girls all the way along.

> A Florida teacher met a class for the first time. He noticed that there was a great deal of confusion and disorder, but he made no point of it. Finally, he raised a question with the class, and one of the students said, "Don't you know that we're the most unruly class in the school? Hasn't anyone told you that we've had that reputation ever since we were in the fifth grade?" The teacher sat quietly for a moment and then said, "Is this a challenge?" The students looked back and laughed. Then one of them said, "No, we just want to tell you so you won't be too discouraged."

That's an example of what happens when a school tags certain classes with a reputation. Students feel that they have to live up to that reputation as soon as they meet with a new teacher for the first time. But the situation also illustrates the way a class tests a new teacher. They were finding out whether he was for them or against them, whether he was going to attack, become frightened, or try to be friendly.

Students need to be able to look to us for the kind of friendly help they would get from their parents. Parents do not condemn their children because they do not measure up to some artificial standard; they accept their children as the best possible children and then work with them in moving in the direction that both parents and children feel is important.

If we want to be accepted as working members of the team, we must make it possible for students to work with us without having their personality violated. Students must find in working with us the kind of experience that allows them to be themselves, to think their own thoughts, to maintain their own integ-

rity, and to develop in terms of the things they think are important.

We lose any chance of working successfully *with* a class when we allow ourselves to be drawn into a struggle for domination with the more aggressive pupils. It should never become evident to a class that we are taking issue with a given student. If it does, we create the type of situation in which one must win. Rather, we should take steps that throw the responsibility for judging what should be done about problems back onto the total class. When a student creates a problem by challenging us, as some students are certain to do, it becomes a problem for group solution rather than one for us to solve by ourselves.

If we assume that we alone should give the answer, then it becomes a question of whether we can enforce it, whether the other students will accept it as better than that of the aggressive student who has challenged us. We cannot engage in a person-to-person quarrel with a student and expect to retain group acceptance; the student group as a whole will automatically be on the side of their age-peer. More basically, such action on our part will interfere with the learning of all the students in the class.

We can move toward acceptance by the group by sharing with members of the group decisions on appropriate action. If we raise the question with students as to what is the most important thing to do and what is the best way to do it, the issue of who will decide what is to be done will never arise. We move toward acceptance by making the issue *what* is right rather than *who* is right.

We increase our chance of being accepted by learning something about the pupils and their families. When we know that big brother is a quarterback on the football team, that big sister has helped organize the school intercultural council, we indicate to pupils that they and their families are important to us. As our comments reveal our knowledge and interest, we move a step toward acceptance. We decrease our acceptance, however, if we use a sister's or a brother's record as a threat or prod.

We move toward acceptance more quickly by learning the names of students. If we are careless or slow in learning them, we are saying brutally to the students that it doesn't matter to us who they are, that they aren't even important enough for us to learn their names.

By familiarizing ourselves with the interests, purposes, desires, and experiences of each pupil we are once again manifesting to them that they are important to us. *As they become important to us, we become important to them.*

We win acceptance more easily by avoiding such statements as, "This is what *I* want you to do," "*I* have decided that we are going to begin this way." Rather, we should proceed by asking pupils, "What is the best way to work together?" "What are the next steps for us to take?" As pupils share decisions with us, they come to accept us. Through the process of sharing decisions we win group acceptance.

Whether we continue to enjoy the acceptance of the group depends upon whether or not we live up to our responsibilities to the group. If we ignore the decisions that we have shared with the group, if we don't play fair in carrying out the plans and policies that have been made together, we lose the ground that we have gained. Acceptance by the group on one occasion does not guarantee life membership. Acceptance is a dynamic condition; it grows either stronger or weaker. Our day-to-day behavior either helps us to develop whatever acceptance we have won or else it decreases that acceptance.

What Are the Pitfalls in Group Work?

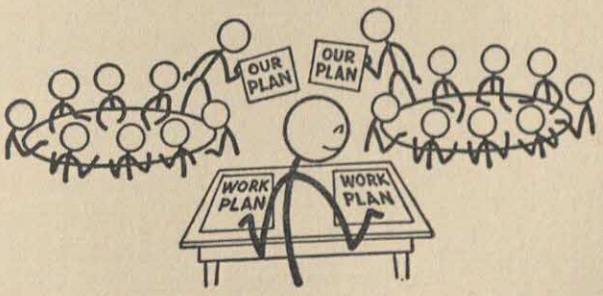
Teachers with wide experience in working with groups have pointed out certain pitfalls that can be avoided.

One of the most common pitfalls is not establishing a definite

agenda. If the group does not plan ahead and establish an agenda for itself, chaos may result. The students develop a hopeless sense of drifting. They have no landmarks by which they can ascertain progress. They lose their sense of direction.

But simply setting up an agenda is not enough. An agenda does not give the course of action; it only states the topics that are to be taken up. Before a class undertakes a project, a plan of work should be formulated which outlines a procedure to be followed and specifies the responsibility of individual students. In the early grades this may be a very informal plan. The children will say, "These are the things we are going to do. John will collect the paints. Mary will water the flowers." But at the high-school level, the plan needs to be a written, step-by-step statement of the procedures to be followed, the results expected from each group, and the various responsibilities of each student.

Some teachers neglect to work out effective means of keeping posted on the progress of each work-group. When there are five or six groups working in a class, we need to know what



each group is doing in order to decide where we can be of most help. As we move from group to group, we need some speedy method of reminding ourselves just what each group is doing at any given time. The work plans of the various committees will usually provide the necessary information. They enable us to provide more help to each group by permitting us to enter its activities more quickly and with greater under-

standing. The plan of a work-group enables us to determine quickly what progress has been made. By checking the number of steps that have been taken and the number still to be taken and by comparing the status of one group with the status of other groups in the class, we collect the information that enables the planning committee to coordinate the class activities. If we don't have this information, we are unable to help the group as a whole to coordinate itself.

Another danger is failure to set up definite lines of responsibility and planning authority. Everybody's business is nobody's business. The direction of group activity will return to us by default unless definite lines of responsibility have been established. A plan that some classes have found helpful is to establish a coordinating committee—sometimes called a planning committee or an executive committee—which meets frequently, perhaps every day, for a few minutes to talk through what is being done and what needs to be done to implement the plan that the total group decided upon before it broke up into work-groups.

Another difficulty that some teachers encounter is how to establish ways for the various groups to share their experiences with one another. The conclusions reached by one work-group may be very valuable to other members of the total class group. If some channel of communication has been established, perhaps through an executive or planning committee, it can serve as a clearing house for the sharing of information among groups. Such a committee can also arrange for the temporary halting of work in the various groups while progress is being shared.

Some teachers have insured the failure of group work by attempting to force the class to work on a project which it does not accept. We should not delude ourselves on this point. Pupils will work as a group only on projects that they accept as important. In group work pupils communicate with each other and express how they feel. They establish ways of combating us if we are forcing them to do something in which they

do not believe. They must, if they are to have any integrity. Group work has a chance of succeeding only as the teacher and the class are working on things which all consider important.

Almost as disastrous is an attempt on our part to make the group stick to our preconceived plans. Since group work means bringing pupils in on the planning, the original plans that we have worked out cannot possibly remain intact as the work gets under way. And even the plans that the group makes for itself must undergo constant revision in terms of the thinking of everyone who has a part in the project. *Group work involves the sharing of the creative intelligence of all members.* If the pupils accept the work seriously, they will try to make their ideas a part of the plan. If they do not accept the work, they will reject it. And in the process, they will also reject us.

Group work is often facilitated by simple physical arrangements—the way in which the furniture is arranged, for example. When we keep the chairs arranged so that all the members face in our direction, we decrease the possibilities of real group work. Group work involves communication among members of the group, and the furniture must be arranged so that they can see one another and work together.

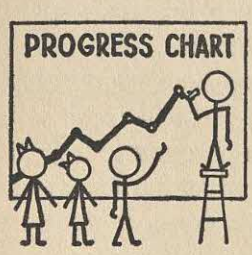
Another pitfall pointed out by teachers experienced in group work is the failure to bring pupils into the record-keeping. If a pupil is to know where he stands at a given moment, he must be able to refer to some sort of record of what he has done. This need becomes even greater when pupils are participating in decision-making and planning. If we keep all the records ourselves, pupils are asked to plan without sufficient data. Group work demands methods by which both the individual and the group can keep records of progress. Procedures for record keeping will be discussed fully in Chapter 10.

Some teachers fail to help the group feel a sense of achievement. This is closely related to the preceding point. When students are directing their own activities, they need to feel that they are making progress. Otherwise, they will become discouraged and will react negatively to their experience. To

prevent this breakdown of morale, we watch for any indication that they have begun to doubt, to falter, or to lose sight of their purposes.

If students are brought into the record-keeping, they know where they stand and they can see the progress they are making. If, in addition, the group from time to time analyzes what it has done, where it has gone and what achievement it has made, high morale is maintained. As people can see that they are achieving, they gain confidence in themselves and they become enthusiastic about what they are doing. With our greater insight into what group progress really means, we can often help youngsters see the progress they have made when they themselves cannot see it. They do not always recognize the evidence they have. If from time to time we take a few minutes to think with the group, to state with it the steps that have been successfully completed, the chance that the group work will be successful becomes much greater.

Other teachers fail to discuss with students how fast their progress should be. The students share in the planning of what is to be done, but they have no clear idea of how soon it should be done. Their students lose an extra factor of security. All of us are controlled by the things that we have to do, whether it is a task set up for us or whether it is a task we set up for ourselves to be completed by a certain time.



In the planning process in a group situation we help youngsters if we take the time not only to establish the things to be done and the procedures to be followed, but also to reach an agreement on the time in which this work will be completed. If this agreement upon deadlines is a part of total group planning, individuals and small work committees within the class will have a responsibility to the total class to complete their work by a certain date.

An agreement of the group is even more rigorous in holding

youngsters to a firm work schedule than is any deadline established by the teacher. Students find it easier to tell us that they have not completed their work by the deadline than they do to tell their classmates that they have not completed work by the time that they agreed on.

As a group has the authority to establish its own purposes, plans, and deadlines, it assumes responsibility for the successful completion of the task undertaken. Sharing in a decision is a process of assuming responsibility.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Work *in* a group, not *on* it or for it.
2. Seek agreement on goals.
3. Propose an organization through which all can participate in planning.
4. Be willing to share the leadership of the group.
5. Have faith that each pupil is important, can make a contribution, has worth-while purposes, can improve, wants to belong, can be trusted, and will live up to the best he knows.
6. Allow students to express their personal reactions.
7. Look for the things a class does well.
8. Encourage students to work together on projects.
9. Avoid a struggle for domination with aggressive pupils.
10. Ask the class what can be done when an issue arises. Stress *what* is right rather than *who* is right.
11. Avoid use of "I want you to—."

Chapter 6

How Can We Help a Class Become a Group?

A class may become a group, but a group doesn't exist merely because a school assigns a number of youngsters to work in the same classroom. A group is born; it emerges when a number of individuals reach some common goals and some common plans.

We perform our function in promoting groupness as we help the class: form a working organization; discover and use its latent leadership; develop maturity; ascertain progress; improve morale; increase unity; and determine the role of the individual in the group.

How Do We Help a Class Form a Working Organization?

The transformation of a roomful of children into a group is a difficult process. Students must decide that group purposes may be more important than their own individual purposes —a decision that never comes easily.

The class seems to bog down for a while and the pupils feel that they are not getting anywhere. They may turn back to us and ask us what we want them to do. We should recognize this step for what it is, *gear-shifting*, one operation in the transfer of control and responsibility from us to the group.

When pupils ask us to tell them what to do, they are using a technique for avoiding the necessity for giving up individual purposes in order to achieve common purposes. As long as we are the person in authority and give the directions, the indi-

vidual pupils do not feel the pain of giving up their own purposes—they never expected to have the opportunity to use their purposes in school anyway. But when we are willing to share with pupils the development of group purposes and when they really begin to believe that their purposes can play a part, the strength of the impulse to have their purposes prevail has to be brought against the same strength in others, and in the process people feel the pain of pushing and striving with others for domination. It is hard, at first, for a group to see that greater satisfaction is achieved by agreeing upon common purposes than through each pursuing his individual purposes.

It is a hard transition for us too, but it pays great dividends. When we share our authority with pupils and bring them in on planning how to use that authority, we are sharing with them a sense of responsibility. Having a part in making a decision involves them in responsibility for the success of the conclusion reached. Their judgment is at stake, and they exert their best efforts to prove that they were correct. *Shared authority and shared responsibility go hand in hand.* We do not lose power by sharing a decision with the class. We gain it, because pupils will assume with us responsibility for the success of the use of authority that they have made. From this point the full power of the total group is supporting the decision—not our power alone.

In order to avoid confusion, frustration, and disillusionment, the areas of shared authority should be clear in the minds of all. Students should know the regulations within which we operate: regulations established by the legislature, the state department of education, the local board of education, the principal, and the faculty. Items such as attendance, tardiness, courses of study, and examinations may be a part of the framework created by these regulations. But we mislead youngsters and invite their distrust when we fail to inform them of the limitations that have been set on the authority we share with them. Or it may be that we will want to reserve certain areas of our authority for ourselves. We may believe that we should organ-

ize content or work out necessary punishment, for instance. If we do, we should make these stipulations clear, along with our reasons for reserving such authority. By being open and straightforward with students, we will avoid the embarrassment of having to veto group decisions or of going back on our proposal to share authority with them.

The amount of authority we share will depend upon the maturity of the learners. Pupils in the seventh grade can be expected to share in a wider range of decisions than can children in the second grade. But we cannot say arbitrarily that we will share certain decisions with fifth-grade but not with fourth-grade pupils. Rather, we should encourage a group to share in decision-making in accordance with its ability to do so. Some sixth-grade groups can deal with problems that some ninth-grade groups cannot.

At the first-grade level much teacher-direction may be necessary. One teacher had the following experience.

> In my class this year I have thirty-seven first-graders with a chronological age range of 5½ to 7½. Their readiness range at the first of the year ran from very low to superior.
>
> I have found that "work committees" are one of the best ways to begin group living and group experiences. Each child is given some small duty in the care of the room. Many of the immature children have to work on individual jobs until they progress to the point they would like to have a "friend" to help them. I always let them choose this friend.
>
> The more mature children work in groups of two or three on a job like cleaning tables—if I carefully explain what is to be done, and each person's part of the job. This last point bothered me a great deal because all I had read or heard about group teaching led me to believe that the children should do their own organization work, and I did not seem to be able to get them to do it successfully. I have talked to other teachers and the resource people who were brought in, and now I feel much better about the whole thing, as they too seem to feel that in the beginning it is necessary for the

teacher to play a very prominent role, since these young children have to be taught to organize and share duties in order to bring the project to a successful conclusion.

We change our committees about every two weeks, and each person chooses someone to take his place. In most instances the children have grown and matured enough so that they are now able to work out their own organization without too much help from me.

The superior pupils have progressed to the point where they can carry a group project through to a conclusion. For example, they will set up their tables for painting, paint their pictures with tempera paint and clean up, putting everything back in place with little supervision.

We judge our teaching by the progress we make—not by the status of the class at any given moment.

Our task is to study the group and to extend its range of decision as rapidly as possible. *We help by continually expecting more from pupils than they are able to deliver, rather than by protecting them from making major decisions simply because we believe that they are not yet ready.*

We need also to recognize that by sharing authority with a pupil we increase his maturity.

As he gradually assumes more and more responsibility, he matures and becomes increasingly more self-directing.

Actually, we do not relax control when we share responsibility. We help the group to substitute its own control for our control; we help it to establish ways of governing and controlling itself. We continue to take part in that control, as does every other member of the group, for we possess and share the responsibility and authority out of which the group self-control emerges. However, unless we are willing to share our authority, the group will never develop control over itself.

In the process of moving from teacher domination to shared control, we need to help the group analyze itself and the situation and to provide appropriate guidance in formulating and

testing various courses of action. Transformation does not occur spontaneously.

As a group organizes to carry out common purposes, there needs to be an opportunity for the members to size one another up to determine one another's capacities and the types of leadership that each person within the group can exert. As students do this, they make several types of growth: they grow in ability to select leaders; they grow in ability to analyze the qualities that provide leadership; they determine who among them will be most effective in doing the things the group needs to have done.

It is wise to suggest to students in the beginning that they keep their organization flexible. Some of the choices they make will be poor, but if their organization is flexible and if officials are not chosen for long periods of time, they will have an opportunity to recover from their mistakes and to make wiser choices.

We can make a major contribution as the class begins small-group work by counseling individual groups and by using one group to demonstrate small-group work to the total class. If we have all pupils watch one work-group and offer suggestions for improvement of its operation, all groups will profit by the suggestions given to the demonstrating group.

In the early elementary school, pupils may work best in pairs or trios, with larger groups used occasionally.

In secondary schools small work-groups formed within the class are more effective when their membership ranges from five to nine. In committees of less than five members, the stimulation decreases and students tend to become less interested. They see less real opportunity to coordinate and pull their work together. On the other hand, in work-groups that include nine or more members, individual students find that they are getting in one another's way, that duplication occurs, and that lack of time prevents adequate communication.

Most small work-groups, unless the members are experienced in group work, will require help in deciding the kind of organi-

zatioı they need, in defining the functions of such persons as the chairman and recorder, and in formulating work plans.

We should be careful to have the small work committees within the larger group recognize their responsibility to the total group in which they are functioning. If each individual committee is permitted to go its own way without any responsibility to the total group, the class will soon disintegrate into a number of small, independent groups. The feeling of belonging together will be weakened. Individual students will begin to identify with their smaller work-groups and thus lose their feeling of belonging to the total class. In planning sessions we want first to help the class develop a total plan, and then from this total plan to help individual committees to set up procedures by which they can delve into the special phases of the plan that seem important to them. The responsibility of the pupils in a small group should not be to themselves alone, but to the total group for whom they are undertaking research.

Frequent progress reports made by each small group to the total group increase the sense of responsibility to the total group. Such reports help stimulate ideas in other groups, and develop cooperation among small groups with common problems.

Arrangements should be made that will encourage the small committees to share with the larger group. Unless the original planning includes provisions for sharing, the small committees will feel less responsibility to the larger group. They may know that they are going to share their experiences eventually, but unless some time in the original planning is spent in deciding how this sharing will take place, its importance does not really make itself felt.

What Is the Place of a Planning Committee?

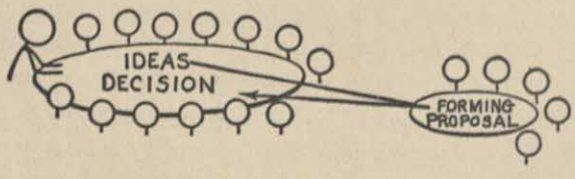
A planning committee may be desirable if the class is large. If the group is less than nine, all the members of the group can plan together intelligently. In a large group, twenty or more, a planning committee serves as a short cut to save time for

the class. It makes possible the meeting of a small number of people who can exchange ideas easily and quickly to form a plan which they then submit to the total group.

A good way to form a planning committee is to have each work-group appoint one pupil to work with the teacher and representatives of other groups.

What are the functions of a planning committee? Its primary task is to secure the suggestions that have come from the total group and to prepare a proposed course of action for the submission to the total group. In other words, it does the "spade work" which shapes into a proposed course of action the many ideas that have come out of the total group. *The planning committee does not start with its own ideas; it starts from the basis that has been established from the suggestions of the total group.*

In some classes the planning committee has developed into a steering group that tells the class what to do. This procedure is just as detrimental to developing strength within the total class as teacher domination is. If a steering committee tells the



class what to do, the organizational structure gives certain members of the class experience in leadership and a share in the responsibility, but it does not bring the rest of the pupils into these very important positions. All proposals of the planning committee should be submitted to the total class for acceptance or rejection.

The planning committee serves another function. It has a special responsibility for discovering ways in which the group can improve itself. Of course every member of the class has this responsibility. But the members of a planning group have

additional responsibility in this area because of the position to which they have been appointed or elected.

Still another function of the planning committee is to make it possible for students who are timid about suggesting ways of improving the class to get their ideas out in the open. When a planning committee is composed of representatives of each small work-group, members of the small work-groups who do not feel secure in presenting ideas to the class can have their ideas come out as group suggestions and not as individual suggestions. In this way their suggestions will receive the consideration of the total group without their status being jeopardized.

The planning committee also may serve as an executive committee to conduct the official operations of the group. Such a plan provides us with an opportunity to share control easily. We no longer have to chair class sessions or appoint someone else to do so. Responsibility for the detailed operations of the class sessions is shared with the students themselves.

A good way of assisting the class to understand the function of the planning committee is to have some of its first meetings held in the classroom, with all the class members as observers. In this manner, all the pupils see how their representation contributes to class plans and how representatives can operate most effectively. It also provides an opportunity for everyone to see how we ourselves work with the planning committee. The students are shown that it does not simply give rubber-stamp endorsement to our ideas or submit its plans for our approval or veto, but rather that it is a true committee in which each person has equal voice and vote. Our ideas receive only the same careful appraisal that is accorded to all other ideas.

Whatever the decision regarding a planning committee, we do well to suggest that the class organization be as simple as possible. Not all classes need a president, secretary, and treasurer. Some classes may decide that the only type of organization they need is a chairman and a recorder working in each group. If the organization is simple, and designed by the

pupils as they plan their program, it is their organization and it is their responsibility either to see that it works or to change it. We promote the pupils' sense of responsibility for the class organization if we avoid recommending an exact organizational pattern.

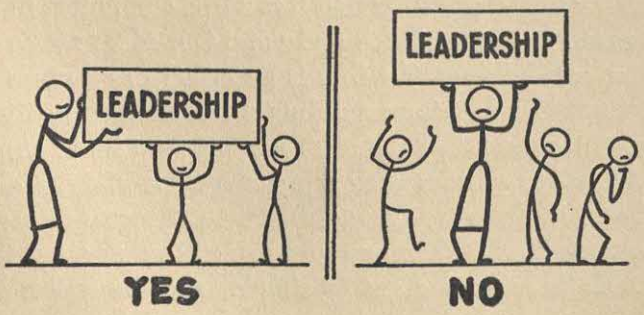
How Do We Encourage Leadership in a Class?

Every group has leaders.

Sometimes we ignore the leadership that exists within the class or honestly believe that there is no leadership in the group because it is weak for the age we are teaching. We find it hard to remember that any class that has not had much opportunity to exert its native leadership will want to be dependent upon teacher direction and domination and will feel insecure without them because the pupils do not know how far they can go or under what conditions they can work.

But we cannot be effective if we discount the leadership in the group. Our function as teacher requires that we start with the basic assumption that every person has the potential for leadership and that it is our responsibility to help this leadership to emerge.

We must step out of the way to let other leadership emerge. As long as our leadership dominates the situation, other, less mature leadership will be overwhelmed. We can discover the leadership within the group by watching the way the group operates before and after school, in the gymnasium, on the playground, or in the club. Students who, because of their



past conditioning, are afraid to attempt to exert leadership in the classroom have freedom to exert it in these areas. We can learn much about the kinds of native ability and leadership of the children in the group just by watching.

Unless we understand the need for our standing aside as pupil leadership emerges, we will feel threatened and challenged. We must recognize that we succeed when we can get pupils to assume responsibility for leadership, not when pupils are doing what we want them to do.

We make it possible for leadership to emerge as we create an atmosphere where people feel free to be themselves. As long as we establish a stereotype of what constitutes satisfactory behavior in the classroom, people are free only to conform to our stereotype unless they want to challenge authority. We make it possible for many types of leadership to emerge as we create a permissive atmosphere in which people feel that many types of behavior and leadership are accepted.

The basic step is to allow the group to plan. As long as we do all the planning for students, we cannot know what leadership is there and we cannot give it a chance to function.

As we plan with boys and girls how to carry on a picnic or to put on a class play, we are utilizing situations in which they can exert leadership without feeling strange and restrained. As they find that they can exert leadership with us in this kind of a situation, they move on to greater freedom and exert leadership in the planning and operation of the class.

If we refer our suggestions to the pupils for their decisions and their examination, we are creating the possibility for other suggestions to be made and for other leadership to take hold.

We provide for the emergence of leadership as we are willing for a class to make a mistake. As long as we are afraid for a class to make a mistake and always step in to protect them from what we consider their mistakes, we are continuing to keep the leadership function within our own hands. *The opportunity for exerting leadership is restricted in great measure to those who have the opportunity to make the mistakes.*

One of the basic techniques for helping leadership emerge is by being willing to sit still when we think students can't handle the situation.

> At a May Day celebration a kindergarten group pretended they were going to the maypole in a covered wagon. Their prairie schooner consisted of a coaster wagon with a barrel in it. One of the youngsters sat on the barrel and the others pulled and pushed. As the group started to go before the parents who were watching the performance, the wagon upset and youngsters, barrel, and wagon piled up on the ground. The teacher could have run to the situation to rescue the youngsters and help to reestablish the wagon on four wheels —but she didn't. She sat still and the five-year-olds turned the wagon right side up, placed the barrel back up on top, three took hold of the hands, legs, and arms of the youngster who belonged on top of the wagon and hoisted her up again, and the group moved on to the finish line of the parade.

By being willing to sit still through what was apparently a catastrophe, the teacher made it possible for the students to exert the leadership potential that they had within them and to solve the problem before them satisfactorily. If the teacher had rushed into the situation and taken over, the boys and girls would have been denied the chance provided by the situation to develop their leadership qualities.

A high-school teacher describes his first attempt with group work as follows:

> One of the most difficult things I had to learn was to just sit back. Many is the time I wanted to step in and say to one of the groups, "I wouldn't go ahead that way. I know from experience that. . . ." But I let them go ahead and merely answered questions when asked or suggested something here and there. After a time, the group realized that nothing would happen to them if they went contrary to my suggestions. Whenever we arrived at a decision that didn't "pan out" too well, we changed it and tried something else. It has been hard for me to change habits and ideas more or less fixed after

twenty-odd years of teaching. Although I have handled clubs and other special activity groups in the past, this is the first time where I tried to sit back and let students decide things for themselves. Too often, teachers are judged by results in an activity. Therefore, we are fearful of students' making the wrong decisions. We find it necessary to interject our wisdom, based on years of experience, into all decisions. Perhaps we are not entirely at fault. Perhaps supervisors and administrators should be more understanding.

He states forcefully one of the strongest pressures a teacher faces while waiting for pupil leadership to emerge.

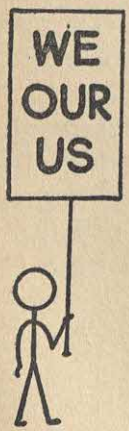
We encourage the development of leadership as we are willing for the class to undergo frustration in thinking through its problems. Whenever we become frightened at frustration within a group, we tend to move too fast in giving the pupils the answers that come from our experience. We feel that if they suffer too much frustration they will become disgusted with the class and with the activity. We fail to recognize that one of the most powerful motivating forces for any of us is to be confronted with difficulty and then to have the experience of satisfactorily overcoming that difficulty. The pleasure that comes with the emergence of leadership and successful experience motivates the continuation of the leadership and the willingness to attempt even more difficult things in the future.

Even after we have worked with students for a period of time and have decided that they have taken real steps in developing initiative and leadership, we find that they have periods when they do not want to assume responsibility. Leadership in the group may seem to grow erratically. One week the students may really want to step out into active leadership and the next week they may want us to resume control of the class. If we are to keep the development constantly moving forward, we must be skillful enough to know when to take over and when to withdraw. We must be alert in recognizing the desire for self-direction and work with it whenever it becomes evident.

How Do We Help Pupils Develop Responsibility to the Group?

The concept of leadership that we hold affects the extent to which all pupils develop a sense of responsibility to the group. *If we honestly stress the idea that everyone can lead, that everyone can contribute, all the pupils will be more inclined to accept responsibility.* But if we reserve leadership for the superior students, the less gifted will be inclined to let them carry the major responsibility. We release the less gifted from responsibility as we reject their contributions.

There are a number of ways in which we can encourage boys and girls to lead by contributing rather than by demonstrating superiority over others. A simple way is to praise the contribution rather than the contributor. Another way is to center the attention of the class on group achievements and group projects rather than on individual showmanship. If assemblies and plays are class projects rather than opportunities for exhibitions by individual students, all the students can feel that they have a part. A third way is to stress contributions to improved living in the school. Developing service groups with membership open to all who wish to assist, rather than honor groups open only to students who show special skills, is one way to emphasize a broader type of leadership.



Our choice of pronouns helps to set the stage for assuming responsibility for the group. If we stress "his," "her," "me," and "mine," we encourage differences and feelings of superiority. But if we use "we," "our," and "us" as often as possible, the group begins to come together. All pupils begin to feel that ideas and achievements are contributions to the class and each has a responsibility to do his part.

Basic, however, to the assumption of responsibility for the group is having a part in the decisions that affect the group.

If we encourage the group to organize in such a way that all members share in making decisions, we help each child to assume responsibility. This point was analyzed in detail previously.

If the class assumes, by group decision, a responsibility to the total school, individual members will feel more responsibility to the group. Whether it is a beautification-of-grounds project or serving as a hospitality committee for an open house, the knowledge that other members of the student body know that the group has a task to perform will keep the individual from "letting the group down." However, if the project is one we have accepted for the class, the responsibility is ours and a student may be willing for us to lose our reputation.

How Do We Help a Group Develop Maturity?

A group has attained maturity when it has accepted the responsibility for its own actions and has become self-directing. Not all groups attain this status. Since maturity grows out of experience, we can expect that most pupils will make some progress in maturity every day they live. However, we can consciously aid them in this progress by encouraging certain activities and attitudes that are characteristic of mature persons.

There are many ways to foster maturity.

One technique is to praise pupils for facing the problems that arise and for seeking their own answers. We can further this process by not giving answers. When we give a class our answers, we deprive them of the opportunity of becoming more mature.

One device for avoiding giving answers is to suggest several possibilities and to leave the choice to the class. We provide help but we leave the group with the real responsibility.

Still another way that we help a class achieve maturity is by letting students discover their own mistakes. When a mistake is made, it is very easy for us to say, "You are making a mistake. We will do it this way." Every time we take such an

action, we check their growth toward maturity. A mature person lives with his mistakes, accepts the responsibility for them, and grows in the process of finding out the consequences of his behavior. By denying pupils the right to discover the consequences of their behavior, we rob them of the opportunity to grow. We assume the responsibility and continue their status as dependent, immature persons. Through continuous evaluation we can help pupils to discover their mistakes quickly and to revise their plans in terms of the evidence rather than in terms of our judgment.

We help a class become more mature by accepting disagreements as a definition of work to be done. Too many teachers pretend disagreements don't exist.

They feel that disagreements within the class are an unhealthy sign, that they should be covered up and ignored in class discussions. If, however, a class has the opportunity to bring harmony out of confusion by struggling with the confusion rather than by holding fast to some demonstratedly inadequate idea or policy, that class grows in the process. Pupils widen their horizons and become more mature when they have a chance to think through conflicting positions and arrive at a new synthesis. Discovering new truths and establishing new policies and codes of conduct constitute processes by which they move from immaturity to maturity. By making it possible for students to face their problems realistically, to work out their own answers, and then to live with the decisions they make, we can help them move forward in their development into responsible, mature citizens.

Our basic contribution, however, lies in teaching the steps in problem-solving which enable pupils to meet new situations intelligently, and the skills of analysis which make it possible for them to interpret the experiences they have.

How Do We Help a Group Know the Progress It Is Making?

It is important for every group to feel that it is achieving, that it is growing in maturity. If a group lacks this feeling, if it

feels it is making the same mistakes that it has made a week, a month, or six weeks before, it begins to lose confidence in itself. But if pupils have some way of checking the progress they are making, they will be able to experience the satisfaction that comes from growth.

The use of a tape recorder makes it possible for pupils to review their progress in discussion and planning techniques over a period of time. Or certain members of the class can be delegated to keep records of class decisions and the reasons why they were made. Then these records can be used by the class as a whole in analyzing its progress. Observers who can discuss and analyze with the class the steps that have been taken during a class meeting serve, in effect, the same purpose.

Flow charts (samples on page 103) used to record class discussions at regular intervals provide evidence of skill in participation. They are devices for recording the flow of discussion within the group. They show whether the participation was widespread or restricted to a few. They also indicate the number of times that we stepped into the picture. The more skilled the group becomes, the fewer times we will have to participate to bring the class back to the issue under discussion, or to summarize, or to restore a feeling of group unity. A flow chart will also tell whether or not the center of attention stayed within a certain part of the class. If a flow chart of a class meeting indicates that the discussion leaders were all in one section of the room, some members may be asked to shift their positions at the next meeting. Or the flow chart may provide data which the entire class will use to change the seating plan. More complicated flow charts make it possible to record the amount of time used by each participant and the type of contribution each made.

It may be necessary for us to help pupils interpret the data they collect. Through our greater experience we have insights which we should share with the group. By comparing current behavior of the class with its past behavior, by pointing out areas in which progress has been made, and by indicating fail-

ure to improve in the handling of certain problems, we can show the students how the class looks to us. Whether they accept our observation as valid depends upon the way we work and the objectivity and fairness they have seen us display. In all these procedures we are helping students to compare previous with present behavior to see if they are satisfied with their progress or lack of progress.

Visiting groups from other classes from time to time can be asked to comment on what they see happening. Or, when another teacher or the principal or the supervisor stops by, he can be asked whether or not he sees evidence of progress. Any device by which we can help pupils sense the changes that are taking place in their ways of working and thinking will lead them to a clearer knowledge of the progress that is being made. The evidence collected by such devices also constitutes the basis for judgments concerning the quality of work being done. This process will be discussed fully in Chapter 10.

But not all evidence is the kind that can be recorded. The way people feel is equally as important in maintaining high group morale. Evaluation sessions in which students discuss their feelings about what they are doing constitute a form of reassurance or an indication of need for revision of procedures. As students hear their fellow students state that they feel this way now as compared to how they felt earlier, they are getting evidence concerning achievements or lack of achievement of the group. Oral evidence of this type is as important to the class as the written evidence of secretary's minutes or tape recordings of earlier work.

We know that real group responsibility is developing when members of the class begin asking for evaluation sessions.

> A California class had been meeting for four weeks. One member opened a session by saying, "Les, John, and I have been discussing this class. We don't believe people are really working in here. Is that right?" The question was addressed to the group, not to the teacher. This group had grown to the point where its members were assuming responsibility for its suc-

cess and were exercising leadership in raising it to the level of its potential performance.

In such situations, we must be careful not to destroy the growth that has been made by regarding the students' comments as criticisms of us. If we go on the defensive and attempt to give the answers to such questions, we are proclaiming that all the responsibility is ours and denying students the right to share in it. But if we can sit back and let the class think through its procedures, simply supplying pertinent data, the pupils will have an opportunity to face reality and to grow in maturity.

How Do We Build Morale in the Class?

The morale of a group depends upon the extent to which its ways of living and working together satisfy the basic desires of the members. Boys and girls, like adults, are concerned with having a feeling of belonging, a feeling of security, a feeling of achievement, a belief that they will get fair treatment, a part in deciding what shall be done, a satisfaction of their own wants and comforts, and a chance for advancement.

Class morale is influenced by many things, but mostly by the way in which we operate. By our procedures we can contribute to conditions that will bring about high morale. If boys and girls feel that they will receive fair and just treatment and know that no one will be granted special favors, if they can trust us and know that we will stand by our word, if we are consistent and can be depended upon to behave in the same way from day to day and to abide by the same values, group morale will be improved.

If we work in such a way that pupils know where they stand and see the progress that they are making, if we help them know where they began and the achievement they have made, they will be more satisfied with their working environment.

We can contribute much to the morale of the group by looking after the comfort of the pupils. We can see that there is enough light, check on ventilation, keep down distracting noise,

arrange furniture properly, choose a pleasing color of paint for the room, and generally attempt to make the room a beautiful, satisfying place in which to live. The morale is even higher if we bring pupils into the process of securing more satisfying working conditions.

Pupils contribute to one another's morale by being friendly, by accepting other members of the group, and by showing a willingness to help others to solve their problems. They are contributing to group morale when they share materials and ideas and do not compete with one another for the credit. We can encourage boys and girls to value acceptance, friendship, sharing, willingness to help, willingness to share credit, and all the other qualities that make it possible for everyone to find in the situation the satisfactions that go to make up high morale.

If we give boys and girls an opportunity to sit down with us and revise unsatisfactory situations, we are creating a procedure through which morale can be strengthened. Factors that destroy good morale are eliminated by this process. We increase students' real belief in the work of the class by bringing them in on decision-making. As boys and girls grow older, they want to move more and more toward independence and self-direction and want to be controlled less and less by the judgment and decisions of the teacher.

How Can We Increase the Sense of Unity in the Class?

One of our functions as a teacher is to help the group develop a sense of unity and a belief that they belong together, that the welfare of each depends on the welfare of the group.

As a class meets for the first time, we will want to take time for students to talk together and get to know each other. Until pupils know the names and personalities of other class members, they have a tendency to be a little bit afraid, to feel a lack of common purposes and interests. But when they can sit down together and discover their common experiences, their

sense of belonging together grows. Knowing names is important. If we learn the names of class members quickly, we encourage each student to know the name of every other person. A simple device like knowing one another's names will help immeasurably in leading pupils to feel that they do have things in common and that they are a social group working together.

Social activities in which students get to know each other in out-of-class situations are also helpful. As they have a chance to play and joke and eat together, they begin to understand and to know each other.

A group grows in a sense of unity and belonging as it helps one of its members out of trouble. When the group as a whole accepts the responsibility for helping a pupil who is having difficulty, there emerges from that experience a sense of belonging together and a pride in achievement. Each student comes to feel that if he is in difficulty, he can rely on the group for the assistance he needs.

Undertaking a joint project is another basic way for people to come together. As they plan and work as a group, boys and girls get to know one another and to respect the contribution that each can make. A sense of kinship is developed by common pride in the thing that they have done well together.

If the class is organized in such a way that each person can see his place in the total class and know that he is represented on the planning committee that determines how the total group will operate, he will begin to feel that he is a real and important part of that class. And if the various committees are held responsible to the total group rather than to individual pupils or to the teacher, as discussed in the following chapter, there is bound to be an increase in the feeling of unity within the class.

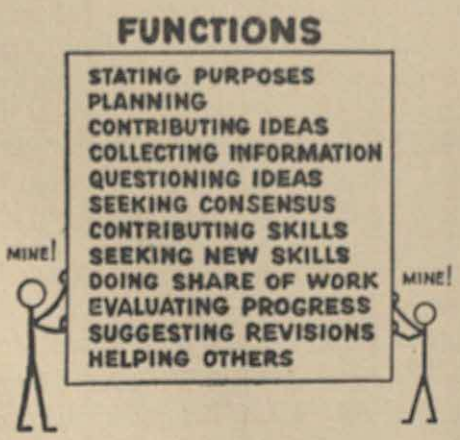
What Is the Role of the Individual Class Member?

Every member of the group has responsibility. He cannot ignore it. Simply because he is living and working with other

people, he must be considerate of them and of their feelings, and he must work as an effective member of the group.

A class member has a responsibility for participating in the planning, for getting his ideas and his purposes considered, for helping the group arrive at a plan. When he holds his ideas and his suggestions back, he is not contributing the full leadership of which he is capable. He must also question other ideas. Unless he questions decisions that to him seem wrong, he is not exercising his group membership. He is responsible, too, for taking the necessary steps to help the group reach consensus, for suggesting integrations of purposes and activities that no one else has seen. As a group member, he is committed to carry out the plan arrived at by the group. This will involve contributing skills that he already has, seeking to acquire new skills that will enable the group to put its plan into action more effectively, and doing his share of the work.

As the work proceeds, he must help the group evaluate its progress and work out changes that will make its efforts more effective. He serves as the group conscience, calling attention to things that are being overlooked or to departures from the original plan. And, at every turn, he is responsible for helping the other members of the group grow more efficient and effective. It is clear, then, that *the role of the individual class mem-*



ber is similar to that of the teacher. He has the same responsibilities and the same functions. Although he probably will not be able to contribute as much as the teacher, he will work and participate in the work of the group in much the same way. *When a class is a group, everyone exercises the same functions in varying degrees.* Leadership and followership shift constantly. We are doing our best job as teachers when we help pupils exercise responsibility in different ways in different situations, always attempting to stimulate each pupil to make his maximum contribution.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Invite pupils to participate in planning.
2. Define clearly for the group the areas in which authority can and will be shared.
3. Extend the range of decisions in which pupils participate.
4. Suggest that group organization be flexible and subject to change in light of evaluation.
5. Encourage individuals and small committees to be responsible to the total class.
6. If the class is large, use a planning committee responsible to the total group as a means of conserving time. Have some meeting of the planning committee before the entire class.
7. Recommend that each work-group be represented on the planning committee.
8. Encourage the desire for self-direction as it becomes evident.
9. Be willing to play a dominating or recessive role as the condition of the group demands.
10. Refer teacher suggestions, as well as pupil suggestions, to the class for examination and decision.
11. Use "we" and "our" rather than "I" and "mine."
12. Allow the class to make a mistake when the results will not seriously harm anyone.

13. Permit the class to experience frustration from time to time and to work out solutions to its problems.

14. Praise the group for standing on its own feet and for solving its own problems.

15. Suggest alternate solutions rather than give answers to a problem.

16. Allow the group itself to face and solve disagreements.

17. Assist the group to devise ways of collecting evidence of its progress.

18. Encourage members to ask for evaluation sessions.

19. Take time at the first meetings to help the group members become acquainted.

20. If possible, have the pupils get together in a social occasion early in their working as a group.

21. Seek to obtain the best possible working environment.

22. Undertake a group project as soon as the class is willing.

Chapter 7

How Do We Help a Group Develop Self-Control?

One of our major functions as a teacher is to help boys and girls develop self-control—an essential of democratic living. We cannot grant this ability or order pupils to be self-controlled and self-directing. It is a skill that must be achieved.

We help pupils attain self-control by assisting them to recognize and develop controls that are not teacher-imposed. The situation, the job to be done, the agreements the group has reached, the values the group evolves are all samples of such controls.

This chapter will deal with ways of helping the class learn to utilize these controls.

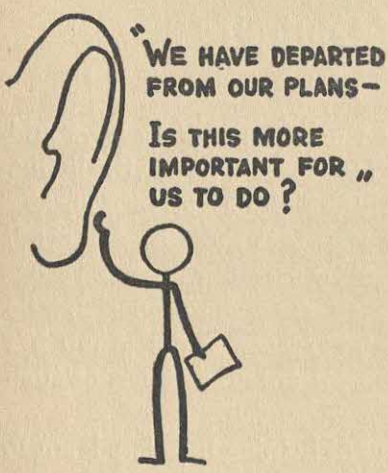
What Controls Exist in a Self-Disciplined Class?

A major source of group control is to be found in school policies and regulations. The class lives and operates within the framework of the school, and its behavior must be consistent with school policies. This subject will be discussed more fully in the chapter on out-of-class relationships. Suffice at this time to mention that the opinion of other students, teachers, and the administrator and the school regulations exercise a control over the class and individuals.

Agenda and deadlines decided on by the group also serve as controls. They make it clear to each pupil just what the group expects him to do and how much time he has to do it in. If the agenda and schedule are tight enough, there will be no time

for lackadaisical effort or for sidepath activities. The members of the group will be controlled by the plan of action that they themselves have set up.

Once policies and plans have been established, we are in the position of serving as the group conscience. It is our function to call to the attention of the group any deviations from the policy or plan that has been formulated. It is not necessary for us to say to the group, "Let's get back to our work." We can say, "We have departed from the plan. Is this the course of action that is most important for us to take?" or "The thing that we are doing now is not within the scope of the policy that we established. Do we want to re-examine the policy?" By encouraging students to make decisions concerning their own behavior when they begin to depart from agreed-upon policy or plans, we create a situation in which they have to think through their answers and reach their own decisions and accept their own responsibilities.



If individuals or small groups within the large group depart from the total group plan, it is our responsibility to have them explain to the total group why they are doing so. It may be that they can convince the total group that the plan should be revised. But it is the responsibility of every group to get clearance from the total group before it undertakes a departure from the established course. Such a procedure should be perfectly satisfactory to us, because it is a learning process in itself.

Agreements with the parents are also group controls. Decisions reached jointly by parents and pupils on what is to be

accomplished during the year constitute the framework and boundaries within which the class may operate. When the pupils, as a result of their working and thinking together, want to depart from these purposes, they have the responsibility of calling back together the people who were in on the original agreement to determine whether or not the policy is to be revised. The pupils, in such a situation, need to ask their parents to join them for another meeting to reconsider desired outcomes.

Participation in forming the policy that will govern behavior is, however, the basic control. A code of behavior established by the class itself guides its actions most effectively. It gives the youngsters security because they know the kinds of behavior that are approved and the kinds that are not. It also puts the pressure of group opinion against undesirable behavior.

Students are usually willing to help us develop a set of rules to govern conduct. They have a strong desire to share in decisions that will affect them and they seize the opportunity to participate when they feel that we are sincere in inviting them to do so.

When students join with us in policy formulation, we strengthen the control if we help them recognize: that policy-making is not play; that they are substituting group control for teacher control; that they are agreeing to live by the rules and regulations they formulate.

After a code has been formulated, there will be times when certain members of the group will want to question it. They can. Even in the areas of such commonly accepted values as truth, honesty, acceptance of other people, and respect for the individual, if they are established as values by the class there will be times in the daily living when implementation becomes an issue. Out of questioning comes new insight for the individual, and perhaps for the entire class. The rethinking of class procedures necessitated by a class member's challenging the existing practice is a real learning situation. But the fact that the code can be questioned, re-examined, and revised gives

it more power as a control. The possibility of change gives any group policy greater influence because each student knows that it is accepted by all—otherwise, it would be changed. Because it is respected by all, he feels a greater responsibility to live by it.

Participation in policy-formation and planning does not mean that the classroom can be as noisy as any student chooses to make it. We cannot allow the classroom to become chaotic. Some order must prevail. Order may be imposed by the teacher, or it may be developed by the students within the class. If some class members will not abide by the regulations imposed by the group, it is our responsibility to enforce these regulations.

If, as a result of the way the group has lived together, a high morale has been developed, it will serve as a control. An individual who is proud of his group will not take action that will discredit it.

How Do We Help Pupils Formulate Values?

If we want pupils to be self-directing, we work with them in such a way that they will develop their own values—ethical, spiritual, and social. Values emerge only through experience; they cannot be given to a person ready-made. They come through an analysis of the experiences that the persons involved have had.

Our best technique for teaching values is through the operation of the class. *We learn what we live.* Certain values are held in common by most Americans. These democratic values can be taught if they constitute the basic framework for the code of behavior in a classroom.

Our first step in helping a pupil to develop a satisfactory set of values is to encourage him to determine what his current values are. Many times a pupil lives without ever being fully aware of the values that guide his behavior. He needs to have an opportunity to talk through with someone who is understanding and sympathetic the types of values and beliefs that

he displays by his actions in a given situation. We should take as many opportunities as possible in class discussion or in individual conversation to raise the questions that help a youngster to look at himself and what he believes. When he hands in a written project, for example, we can ask him by what standards he has judged his work. If his paper is sloppy, with misspelled words and poor grammar, if it reveals antisocial attitudes, we can ask him whether this piece of work really measures up to the standards that he holds for himself. We can try to help him see that a person's values are manifest in his beliefs and the standards he sets for himself.

We can help pupils develop their own values by encouraging them to investigate the values their fellows hold. In a population as cosmopolitan as the American, we know that every classroom includes youngsters from families with a wide variety of backgrounds. Out of these backgrounds come different values, revealed in different beliefs and different standards. As youngsters have an opportunity to talk together about the standards and beliefs that are held in their own homes, each youngster has a wider basis for determining the quality of his own values. We must be careful, however, in the way we treat the values our pupils hold.

> For example, in a school in New York City, a teacher found that one boy was making book on the horse races. The teacher was faced with the decision of what to do. As he began to inquire into the situation, he found that the boy's father was also a bookmaker. If the teacher had said to the boy, "Your values are all wrong. They are antisocial and unworthy," he would have been condemning the boy's father. The boy would have been torn between loyalties, loyalty to his teacher and loyalty to his family. It is easy to guess which allegiance would have won out. If the teacher had told the boy before the class that bookmaking was wrong, he would have destroyed any chance he had of helping the boy to revise his values in a positive direction. The boy's values would only be changed positively as he had an opportunity to contrast

them with other values in a situation where he and his family were not threatened.

Whether or not there are any fundamental, unchanging values, *the functional values for an individual are those that he accepts.* We cannot hope to secure an individual's acceptance of our values, however we determine them, by telling him that he is wrong and we are right. Such an approach forces him to defend what he believes and to deride and reject our values without a sincere examination.

Should We State Our Values?

It is important that we make clear to the group what values we hold. This does not mean telling the pupils what values they should accept. It means rather that we are open and honest about the values we regard as worth while just as we expect children to be honest about theirs. We explain our reasons for holding certain values and give the pupils a chance to explain their reasons for holding theirs. We make no claims about which values are superior. The superiority of given values is ascertained only by the group as a result of its own analysis. If boys and girls do not decide to accept our values as a result of examination and trial, we cannot force them to do so by authoritarian procedures.

An example of the difficulty that a teacher encounters in the area of values is found in a community in which there are many religions.

In one Long Island community, the school population is divided almost equally among members of the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant faiths. Suppose a teacher goes into that situation and tells boys and girls that there is only one true religion. What chance does he have of acceptance? What chance does he have of getting boys and girls to examine freely and openly the values that they hold? It is easy to see in this situation the lack of possibility for the teacher really to influence the values of boys and girls when he takes a dogmatic position and tells

them what they should believe. To make the contrast still more evident, suppose a teacher in a city in which there is a strong labor organization goes into the classroom and tells boys and girls that labor organizations are detrimental to the welfare of the population. Suppose he advocates the abolition of labor unions. What are his chances for changing the attitudes of boys and girls?

Attempting to tell pupils which values to accept is undesirable for other reasons. Pupils would not be developing self-direction. If another teacher came into the situation later with different values, he would give them a contrasting set. Pupils would become increasingly dependent on someone to tell them what is right. We are seeking self-directing citizens in a democracy.

As the members of a class have opportunities to think through together the issues that confront them, each individual student develops his own values. If certain youngsters reject the values that are commonly accepted in American society, we can work and talk with them on an individual basis to discover if they see the full implications of their values. In these cases, unless the pupil is hindering the development of the group or harming some individual within the class, our approach is always through analysis and through helping him find implications in his behavior that he may not have been aware of. Force may win compliance but it will not win acceptance. Persuasion may win verbal acceptance but not valid commitment.

How Can We Acquaint Pupils with Other Values?

If the previous experience of an individual student has given him little opportunity to become aware of the social values of his community, his school experiences should help him obtain this information. Suppose a first-grade boy comes from a home in which stealing is accepted. He needs to discover that the community as a whole regards stealing as unacceptable. He needs to come into contact with the standards of honesty which

prevail throughout the rest of the community and to recognize the implications of taking a stand in opposition to the community and social standards. Values are raised only as individuals and groups become aware of new values which promise to make life richer than the ones previously held. We cannot force individuals or groups to accept values.

We can, of course, cause pupils to repeat mechanically the answers we have stated, but we cannot make them believe the answers. We can see the way attempting to "give pupils the answers" operates where local customs—not major values —are involved. We may tell high-school boys they should bow when they ask a girl to dance, but they will reject the statement once they see that their older brothers are successful with girls without bowing. An English teacher in a rural community tried for two years to convince pupils that they should not say "ain't." But on the playground they continued to use "ain't" constantly. In the classroom, out of deference to the teacher, because they liked her, they said "am not," but in other situations they followed the customs of their family and friends. How much less chance we have of changing deep-rooted values simply by telling people they should change.

We have a responsibility, however, for helping pupils to test their values by contrasting them with values that are national and world-wide in scope.

Sometimes the experiences of certain members of the class will suggest to the others new values that they have not previously experienced in their community.

> A third-grade boy who had previously attended a school in which racial intolerance was completely unknown moved to a community that excluded Negro children from the school he attended. One day, as the boy was playing with his classmates in the schoolyard, a Negro boy passed by. One of the other pupils yelled out a derogatory name that was offensive both to the Negro and to the boy who had never before experienced such attitudes. The new boy promptly hit the offending pupil.

What should the teacher have done? How could she have helped the new boy recognize the difference in standards and the implications of his act? What future behavior should she have advised him to follow? What should she have said to the boy who called out the offensive name? What opportunity did this incident provide for the entire class?

Two sets of values were in open conflict. The teacher was presented with a made-to-order situation. By her questions she could encourage each pupil in the class to examine his own standards, to compare them with those of his fellows, to contrast the standards of the group with which he lives with the standards of other groups, regions, and authorities, and then to determine the values that to him were acceptable.

The analysis that is made will differ in length and intensity from grade-level to grade-level and from incident to incident. No single analysis stands alone. Developing values and self-direction is a long-term proposition. As teachers, our security lies in the recognition that the values that a group or an individual formulates at any moment represent only their present experience and insight and are satisfactory only when they are kept open to revision in light of new experience. Helping pupils see and verbalize the values they live by is not easy, but helping them to formulate new values is even more difficult. If the values which seem preferable are in conflict with those of their age-group or of the community, we can help by bringing them into contact through discussion, movies, radio, or the printed page with persons who hold different values. If the difference raises questions in the mind of the pupils, that is the opening wedge.

How Shall We Use Authorities?

We cannot stop with the experiences of the class or local community and feel that we have performed our function. In the area of social, political, and economic values, boys and girls should have an opportunity to come into contact with points of view that have been taken by religious authorities, by philoso-

phers, and by social scientists. As they examine the values held by people who have had more experience than they, each class member has a more adequate way of judging his own values. Let's consider values at the level of standards by which we judge writing. If an English class is studying literature and rejects every type of literature except the comics and pulp magazines, the class should also have an opportunity to come into contact with the values and standards held by authorities in the field of literature. The class members may reject these standards. They may refuse to accept the standards of authorities as values for themselves. But if the school is to be a richer learning environment than the home and community out of which the boys and girls have developed their own standards, the pupils must have contact with a greater number of standards.

Our failures in the areas of conflicting values come as we attempt to tell pupils the answers. Our success comes through our skill in impartial consideration with pupils of the conflicting values that bear on the problem being solved. If we move to an analysis of the differences and the implications of each, that is as far as we can hope to go.

If we take a position in opposition to accepted patterns, we may lead the students to reject us. A refusal to examine open-mindedly the beliefs and ideas of adolescents has caused many teachers to be labeled "outdated" and out of touch with reality. When this condition exists, we cannot hope to be effective in helping pupils formulate their values.

If the community or age-group is divided on values, our task is easier. It consists of letting the class examine and analyze the varying viewpoints. On the basis of the analysis, each student is free to accept the values he finds most valid.

Certain groups within the community may not want children to have the opportunity to examine contrasting values. They may be so sure they have the answers which all should accept that they insist that pupils not be allowed to examine the issues in certain areas. The groups and the areas in which they attempt to restrict examination will vary from community to

community and from time to time. Our protection as teachers lies in bringing the various groups of the community together to decide upon policy, in establishing the kind of close relationship with the parents of our group that will give them confidence in us, in calling to the attention of groups within the community the statements of their national organization concerning examination of controversial issues, and in forming local lay groups to advise us on materials and procedures.

How Do We Help a Group Apply Values?

Not all youngsters are equally self-disciplined. Some are able to establish purposes and to work in terms of those purposes. And some can go along with the group in establishing group purposes and in having their behavior controlled by the group. But others have not developed to the point where they can discipline themselves in terms of either the group's purposes or their own. We call these children our discipline problems.

Our hope of success with these youngsters lies in the approach to discipline that we make with the total group. As we begin to work with a class, we stress that we are all there to help one another, that each of us will do the things we think will be best for the others. We attempt to help the students recognize that people differ and that experiences that are good for one student will not be good for another.

By working with pupils on the concept of helping one another, we make possible individualized treatment of misbehavior. Students will come to expect that we will treat each of them in the most helpful way possible. They will then abandon the attitude that our treatment is unfair because it varies from one pupil to another.

Each student should learn that he has a direct responsibility to the group.

> In a junior high school in California there are no tardy bells. At the end of a period, a light flashes in each room. At the beginning of the year each class agrees with the teacher how long it will need to get from its previous classroom. If they

have to come two doors down the hall, they may agree to be ready to work in three minutes. If they come from the opposite end of the building, a seven-minute limit may be set. Or if the members of the class have been in different parts of the building during the preceding period, arrangements are made for those farthest away to come in later, so that time is not lost for all. Someone accepts the responsibility for helping latecomers to find out what is under way.

The responsibility is that of group members toward one another, not just toward the teacher. If students realize that behavior and enforcement of behavior rules are their own responsibilities, they will take over much of the responsibility for disciplining their class members.

In an eleventh-grade class, the teacher had been emphasizing self-direction, but four students out of thirty-two consistently misbehaved. At last the other members of the class asked the teacher if she would leave for a few minutes and let them work out the problem. When representatives of the class came for her a half an hour later, she found that the difficulty had been settled. And it remained settled for the rest of the semester.

But students are not always completely successful in developing self-discipline. It may be necessary in some cases for us to deal with certain class members.

When we are faced with the responsibility of requiring an individual in the group to live up to the policies of the group, we talk with him of his violation of group controls rather than in terms of our satisfaction or dissatisfaction with his behavior. Our first step will probably be to hold an interview with the student involved to discuss with him the extent to which he is challenging the policies agreed upon by the group. We raise with him questions concerning why he is doing it and whether he sees the full implications of his act. The discussion may lead to bringing the issue before the entire class as an occasion for reconsidering policy, or it may lead to the student's acceptance of the policy and agreeing to abide by it.

If the interview does not lead to agreement, we will need to talk further with the student and with one of his parents. In this interview, we will once again make clear the emphasis that the class places on self-direction and self-control. We will talk with the child and his parent about the policies, codes of behavior, and plans that have been agreed upon by the total group. We will make clear that the pupil has had a part in making all the decisions, that he has had an opportunity all along the line to submit his ideas and to help the group revise its thinking. We will point out that the pupil has failed to live up to his agreement. It is the responsibility of the parent and the teacher to help the youngster face the reality of the situation. Punishment may be entirely unnecessary. We are not concerned with getting even with the pupil or with having him pay the penalty. Our only concern is to help him realize the importance of fulfilling his responsibilities.

Is Punishment Necessary?

Group punishment is not an answer to any problem and should never be used. Whenever we find we have to resort to it, we should realize that we have failed to establish a satisfactory code of behavior with the class. Certainly all the youngsters in the class haven't departed from the values to which they are committed. Mass punishment decreases our chances of working effectively with pupils who have failed least in self-discipline. Whenever it seems that the class as a whole has departed from its code of behavior, a class session for group evaluation is in order. We, as a member of the group, have the right and responsibility to call for an evaluation of the group's code of behavior whenever the members of the group seem to be departing from the course that they have set. So does any other member of the group.

When we think punishment of an individual seems to be the only course left in a certain situation, the first step is to seek agreement on what has occurred. We cannot be content to rely wholly on our own observation or the observation of any other

member of the group. When some apparent misbehavior has occurred, our first step is to establish the facts. Our primary question is "As you saw it, what happened?" As soon as agreement has been reached, the problem becomes simpler. We can decide what approach will be most helpful. But if agreement cannot be reached, any disciplinary action that we take may be considered unfair and may be misinterpreted by the student. Once we have decided just what happened, we set about determining the causes for the pupil's behavior. We can't always get at the causes simply by asking. If we ask the individual why he did what he did, we may put him on the defensive. A helpful question is, "Can you add any information that will help us understand your action better?" Unless we know the causes of an action, we are not in a position to make intelligent judgments concerning it.

If the pupil, as a result of analyzing with us what he has done and why he did it, recognizes that he has made a mistake and shows that he is willing to correct it, there is no need for punishment. If he can say, "This is what I did and this is what I am going to do to correct it," the situation has gone as far as it needs to go. We have worked with the student in a beneficial way. *Punishment is only one way of affecting behavior, and it is one of the least effective.* It is used only when other procedures have failed and we recognize even while administering it that it will probably fail too.

When punishment is necessary, the third question that we should ask is, "What do you think should be done?" It should be kept clearly in mind that punishment is not getting even with a pupil but helping him face the reality of the situation. If the situation has advanced to the stage where something must be done, the student is in as good a position as we are to make recommendations concerning the way that we can help him gain an understanding of the full significance of his behavior. If he does not propose a solution that we can accept, we are forced to make the decision by ourselves.

As we move into this third step with any pupil, we must be

sure that it is not an attempt to salvage our dignity but is really an effort to help a youngster see the full implications of his behavior.

Certainly we must do all in our power to keep punishment from becoming a personal issue between us and the student. To insure that we are not taking revenge or satisfying our ego, it is well never to administer or recommend punishment while we are angry or hurt.

Punishment should not be a routine thing. One of the major difficulties in high schools is that time spent in detention halls is looked upon as a way of paying a debt to society. The student who has done something that is unsatisfactory pays his debt, and that's all there is to it. Instead of being a routine payment in terms of time or privileges, punishment should be a corrective measure. Once a student sees that he has made a mistake, we should work out with him what he can do to remedy that mistake and to prevent it from occurring again. *Punishment becomes a step in planning with boys and girls the things that can be done to bring about a more satisfactory relationship with the group.*

In this sense, punishment is not something that is autocratically imposed. The student has been in on all three steps of the disciplining process: (1) ascertaining what the behavior was, (2) getting at the causes of the behavior, and (3) planning for compensation and ways in which he can become a more effective member of the group in the future.

In any relationship with an individual student, his welfare and progress should be our primary consideration. Disciplinary action should be taken only in terms of improving his relationship within the group.

The foregoing statement should not be interpreted to mean that a pupil would be punished for a single misbehavior. Punishment is the outgrowth of unsuccessful counseling.

When we find that a youngster is not abiding by the code of behavior established by the group, we begin a long process of trying to help him. We check our own behavior and class procedure to see if we are unwittingly causing his trouble. Is our sense of humor becoming a little frayed? Are we more disturbed than usual? Are we demanding too much of the group? We study the pupil's records and begin to observe his behavior more closely. Has there been a change in his home situation? Have we overlooked important factors in planning with him? We spend extra time counseling with him. How can his work be made more effective? What improvements need to be made? We talk with parents. Punishment is only the last resort.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Encourage pupils to develop their own standards and values.
2. Assist pupils in determining what values they hold.
3. Encourage pupils to share their standards with one another.
4. Make your values known to the group, as well as your reasons for holding them.
5. Aid pupils to discover the values held throughout the nation and world.
6. Seek to incorporate the values held in common in our society into the way of living in the group.
7. Formulate a code of behavior or policies governing conduct with the class.
8. Serve as group or individual conscience as necessary in helping group members to live up to agreements.
9. Use departures from group agreements as learning situations and as opportunities to test the established policies.
10. Counsel, where possible, instead of punishing, in dealing with undisciplined behavior.
11. Seek agreement on facts, discover causes, and secure the pupils' recommendations if punishment is necessary.
12. Avoid group punishment.

Chapter 8

How Do We Plan with the Group?

Skillful planning with pupils is the very core of teaching for efficient learning. Without pupil-teacher planning, motivation may be superficial and class time may be a waste of the teacher's energy and the pupils' opportunities.

Student-teacher planning requires a fundamental knowledge of motivation, pre-class planning, and skill in organizing the planning sessions.

How Do We Motivate?

Basic to any skillful planning with pupils is an understanding of motivation. A false assumption that interest and motivation are synonymous limits our effectiveness in pupil-teacher planning.

We cannot expect students to be enthusiastic about the same things that we are. But this is probably one of our most common mistakes. We assume that because our previous experience with Shakespeare or with clay-modeling has been satisfying, other people will respond in the same way. This is not true. We can expect students to be interested only in the types of things that they have experienced and have found good. They may *acquire* enthusiasm for the things about which we are enthusiastic, but they don't necessarily *start* with our enthusiasm.

If students want to learn a particular skill or certain information, teaching is a very simple process. It is nothing more than helping them find the necessary materials, or explaining to them what we already know about what they want to learn, or demonstrating and providing opportunity to practice the

basic skills that we have and that they want to acquire. It is no trouble to teach most girls how to use make-up, for example. They want to learn. The problem in teaching comes when we attempt to get youngsters to learn something that they are not interested in or actually don't *want* to learn. If we are the only ones who want something to happen or who want students to learn certain things, we have a difficult time transferring that "want-to" from ourselves to the student.

Sometimes we mistake "attention-getting" for motivation. Let's examine an adult's motivation. A father sits in his study. Jack, his six-year-old son, yells outside the window. The boy attracts the man's attention. The father looks out the window and sees that his son is playing with a snake. His parental interest is aroused and he watches. He questions Jack about its length, its color, and the shape of its head. They talk for a few minutes about snakes and then the son asks his father to help him build a pen to keep the snake in. But the man shakes his head and turns back to his writing.

Much teaching is like that situation. The teacher brings in a device to get the students' attention, like Jack's yelling. The pupils look and talk with the teacher, as the father did with Jack, and are then ready to go back to their other pursuits. When the teacher asks them to do something about it, they have no greater desire to do it than Jack's father did to help Jack make a snake pen.

But the teacher has something that Jack did not. He is bigger than the pupils and knows more ways of appealing to their pride, curiosity, good sportsmanship, and other sources of motivation. He also can use force—marks, isolating the pupil from friends, detention, derogatory remarks on the permanent record which may hinder future life activities. Whether he uses entreaties, blackmail, or physical force, the teacher does not create real motivation. The pupil is going to sneak away from the task as soon as he dares—just as the father would if Jack could have forced him to help him with the pen.

But suppose Jack's comments have confirmed the father's

sneaking suspicion that the snake his son was examining was a coral snake. He would have bolted from his chair, grabbed a hoe, stick, or gun, and gone to kill the snake despite his distaste for the job. After he had killed the snake, presuming he was the successful gladiator, he would have searched the yard for still other snakes. All this action, even entering a dangerous fight, would have been undertaken to do something he thought was important, to preserve the safety of his child. *We take action without artificial stimulation and keep at it without supervision or reward when we believe there is something important to do.*

Some teachers make the mistake of assuming that motivation is a simple process of arousing interest. They think they are motivating students when they arouse enough interest to secure the pupils' willingness to talk with them for a little while about a certain idea. They write lesson plans in which they indicate the devices by which they will motivate. Each plan for each period contains a "motivating device." These teachers aren't really creating motivation; they are simply stimulating interest. And often the interest is very superficial. They don't go beyond the interest-arousing stimuli. They merely hope that by getting youngsters to talk with them for a few minutes, they will succeed in bringing about real and valuable learnings.

Actually true motivation goes much deeper than that. It involves the basic drives and purposes of the individual. Our function is helping a class or an individual recognize and focus the motivations they have as they come to the class. Any simple surface interests that we can create are not really the motivating forces in their lives.

Motivation is closely associated with the values that a pupil holds. His values determine whether or not he will put effort into a project. If he can see that the things that he believes in and wants will be furthered by the project or the activity, he will engage in it wholeheartedly, with no question about the amount of effort expended. But if he is not really motivated, if his interest has been artificially stimulated by the teacher,

his reaction will be, "Well, how much work do I have to do?" "Is this enough?" When he is truly motivated, however, he never thinks about whether he has done enough to satisfy his teacher. Rather, he asks himself, "Have I done as much as I can in the available time?"

When we believe something is important to do, we are motivated. We have a purpose and do our best to fulfill it. A motivated student is one with a purpose. An interested child may not have purpose. Interest may be mere whim—a short-lived response to a passing stimulus. *Purpose is being concerned about accomplishing something.* If the purpose is strong enough, it will control behavior.

We don't have to worry about whether or not pupils have purposes. They all have them. They have vocational goals; they are attempting to establish certain human relationships; they are seeking to attain certain material objects. Just because some student purposes may not coincide with the purposes of the school is no reason to conclude that the students lack motivation.

Jack could have looked at his father when he did not respond to the invitation to help build the snake pen and could have decided that his father was lazy, shiftless, and unintelligent. Jack could have said that his father had no purposes, or motivation, because he was not concerned about the snake pen too. Some teachers make exactly the same type of judgment concerning the pupils they teach because of an inadequate understanding of motivation.

We can strengthen pupils' motivation by helping them to recognize and implement their socially acceptable purposes, rather than by trying to create an artificial interest in activities that they care little about. New purposes, and thus new interests, are developed as pupils widen their horizons while pursuing present purposes. For example, while learning how to make a bow and arrow he wanted, David, aged seven, learned about spears and knights in armor and for a time became

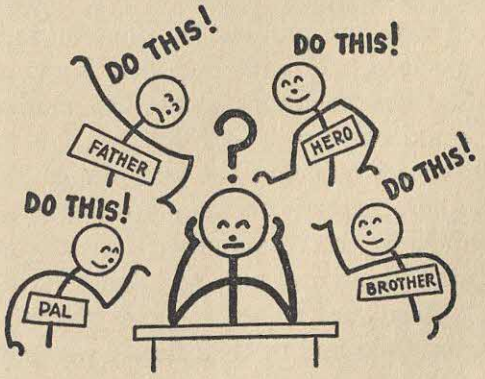
deeply interested in studying about castles, moats, and how people lived in Robin Hood's time.

Our work in motivation involves a study of the background and environment of our pupils. It requires knowing enough about each pupil to discover his purposes and values. Actually, motivation develops from any of the purposes that he may have, regardless of when or how these purposes were originally created.

What Determines a Pupil's Motivation?

Some children's purposes are influenced by their relationships with their parents. For example, a parent may want his child to go to college. If the child is anxious to please his parent, he may select a college preparatory course and try to learn the content of the course, even though he isn't interested in it. Another child may be attempting to show his parents that he really has certain abilities that they refuse to recognize. In either case, the relationship of the child to his parents is an important factor in his motivation.

A child's age-group will also determine his purposes. He wants to be accepted; he wants to belong; he wants to be recognized. The ideas, the goals, and the attitudes of his gang will be directly responsible for many of his purposes. He will try to do those things that will give him status in his own age-group.



On the other hand, older friends outside the age-group help to create his purposes. The comment of an older cousin, the approval of the gang leader in the block, the attitudes of his heroes, all influence him. If a boy wants to be a second Joe DiMaggio, he will attempt to do the things that Joe DiMaggio says are important. If a girl wants to be a movie star, she will try to copy the way her favorite movie star dresses, the way she combs her hair, the way she walks. Any attempt on our part to belittle or deride the recommendations of the hero is, in the mind of the child, an attempt to destroy his purposes. The child will fight back and will attempt to retain and carry out the purposes he had when he first entered the classroom.

Movies, radio, and television all significantly affect the way children attempt to attain their purposes. Situations portrayed as desirable in these media will often be accepted as desirable by the children who see them. They seek to attain success in the ways they have seen it attained in the movies and television programs. During the early 'fifties we had a sweeping demonstration of the influence of movies and television on children's purposes. Boys and girls who had never seen a cow or a horse, or plains or mountains, suddenly wanted cowboy hats, cowboy guns, cowboy equipment of all kinds. Why? Because motion pictures and television had built up a "two-gun rootin' tootin' " cowboy as the acme of success and enjoyment. Teachers were faced with the problem of what to do with youngsters who came to school with high-heel boots, toy guns, or even real guns. They couldn't ignore the motivation of the pupils; they could only work with it.

Community mores influence the purposes of boys and girls. They want to be accepted and they are motivated to behave in ways approved by the community. If members of the community say "ain't," boys and girls will find it hard to start saying "am not." They want to be accepted by their parents and by their older brothers and by their heroes who say "ain't." Any teacher who attempts a different pattern of behavior is con-

fronted with the task of discovering purposes as strong as the desire to be accepted by the gang, family, and community.

Community issues also lead to strong motivation. When children see the adults of the community divided on certain issues, they wonder why and they begin to ask questions. The intense emotion displayed by their parents and friends increases their desire to find answers.

Pupils' purposes are also influenced by the statements and behavior of their teachers. The strength of this factor depends on what they think about their teachers. If they believe that a certain teacher is a fine person, a person they like, a person they enjoy being with, they give serious consideration to his wishes. If they respect him for his scholarship, reputation, or knowledge, they may want his respect. A teacher may deny all we know about human relations and still be able to get boys and girls to work in his class simply because of an excellent reputation. Another teacher without the reputation might practice the same behavior but find himself ostracized by his students. A teacher's influence on pupil purposes often depends more on what pupils think about him than on what he actually does.

The impact of all these influences and others determines the purposes which pupils bring to school, and these purposes constitute the basic motivation with which we work.

How Is Pupil Motivation Discovered?

Boys' and girls' purposes are revealed in many ways. During a sharing period, when pupils are talking about the things that interest them, a pupil may casually mention something that he wants to do. Or someone may say, "That's something I wish we could improve." Sometimes the entire class comes into the classroom bubbling over with excitement about some project they wish to undertake. The alert teacher is waiting for these opportunities and is ready to go along with the purposes that are in line with the objectives established for the school program.

Not all purposes are alike or of equal value in a learning situation. A child might pay close attention to the reading of *As You Like It* and do the homework faithfully each night without feeling that the play was worth reading. Such a child undoubtedly has a purpose. Probably the purpose is to get a good mark in English to please mother, but it is not to gain a richer understanding of human nature or a deeper appreciation of Shakespeare's beauty of expression. Another child in the class may read his homework because he finds enjoyment in the outlook on life held by some of the characters. His purpose is to enjoy himself. No prod by mother or the teacher is necessary to get him to work. A group of boys building a boat do not need us to urge them to work faster or their mothers to praise them for the "A's" they receive in woodworking class. Rather, they are impatient if we are not available to help them when they encounter difficulties. Instead of our pressing them to get their work finished, they are as concerned about finishing the project as we are.

Purposes are easy to discover but sometimes difficult to utilize in the classroom. All pupils have desires, things they want to do, information they want to obtain. If we can discover these desires and then help the child plan activities that will result in their fulfillment, we need not worry about providing additional motivation. He will be working on something that he considers important.

The difficulty comes in the administration of such a class. Thirty different children may choose twenty different topics or activities. Should we let them study that many different topics in one class? The answer is *"Yes"* if we can guide that many activities. But no one can teach twenty lessons at one time—that is, if we think of teaching as telling pupils answers. If we use the type of motivation that has just been described, we will not teach in the traditional sense of telling students about something. Our teaching will consist of helping pupils plan how they are to get the information they desire and assisting in the carrying out of the plan and the evaluation of the re-

sults. Some of us may be able to guide three work-groups. Others of us may have the skill to coordinate ten groups. The greater our skill in providing for a number of groups, the surer we will be that we are working with real pupil purposes.

Motivation, when considered as a teacher problem, is closely related to discipline and guidance.

A disciplined pupil is one with a purpose strong enough to enable him to ignore or fight off the distracting features of his environment. If the purpose is one that coincides with the purposes of the school, we recognize his discipline. If his purposes are not satisfactory to us or do not agree with those of the class, we may label him undisciplined.

We cannot deal successfully with the pupil we call undisciplined by telling him that he must forget his purposes and accept those of the class. No one changes purposes because someone else tells him to. He may seem to acquiesce until some purpose stronger than his desire to please us comes along. Or we may be able to arouse his interest for a few minutes. But if we are going to deal with real pupil motivation it is necessary to discover why he refuses to accept the purposes the school thinks are important. Such knowledge is obtained through guidance and counseling procedures.

The development of adequate motivation is assured when we give pupils an opportunity to organize their experiences around the problems that to them seem vital. If they can say, "These are the things we want to know" or "These are the things that are important to us," motivation takes care of itself. By stating their concerns, students identify the motivation that is present in the class. It will only be broken and dissipated when we, in organizing the experiences with the class, create the kind of situation in which students are unable to carry out their purposes.

We must take the time to talk to students, to discover their real purposes, and to analyze any lack of motivation to do the things the school considers important. But we will discover nothing unless we create a situation in which pupils feel free

to talk, unless we are willing to listen to them, and unless we are aware that their purposes are not necessarily the same as ours.

How Much Motivation Is Necessary?

Pupils approach any situation with many distinct purposes. They may look upon an English class as a terrific bore, but they may at the same time have an intense desire to get to college. As a result of the value that they attach to becoming a college student, they will put up with what they consider the useless activities of the English class in order to achieve the college career they value. It works the opposite way too. A student who is concerned about being accepted by the boys in the gang, all of whom belittle English, may make fun of and refuse to participate in studying a poem or play that he might otherwise be inclined to enjoy.

Not all the purposes an individual has operate with equal power in a single situation. His desire to belong to the gang may conflict with his desire to win teacher approval. Although both purposes are real, *the purpose that is of greatest importance to the student at the moment is the one that is the motivating force in the situation for him.*

Group motivation has been achieved when the class agrees to undertake a project. As long as the ideas or the plans are ours, we are still in the position of attempting to arouse interest. When pupils have decided that a task is worth doing, have participated in planning, and have committed themselves to its completion, we are in a position to ask individuals who change their purpose, "Did you make an intelligent decision? Can you improve it? Are you living up to your agreement with the class? How can you do so more adequately?" The burden of proof and explanation is on the shoulders of the student.

The members of the class assume responsibility at the moment they decide on the project to be undertaken and the methods to be followed. From this point on, our role is that of

a consultant and a resource person, until it is time for further evaluation and planning.

Motivation cannot be achieved in fifteen minutes. When we talk to a student about his failure to exert effort in class, we too frequently make the error of assuming that the interview must lead to a commitment from him. Such an assumption blocks our chances of success. If we try to crowd a student into doing something, he becomes defensive. The interview degenerates into a battle of wits. As it becomes a game or battle, we lose our chance of helping the pupil find how he can further his purposes in our class.

Of course, students should not be permitted to do nothing at all. No student should get the impression that he will get something for nothing. He should be made fully aware of the consequences of inactivity. A student who refuses to exert any effort should not receive credit or be passed. In interviews or group planning, this point should be made clear, but we should not attempt to make decisions for the pupils or force them into action. At all times, they should know that we are ready to help them decide and to work with them.

Our job is to help them examine their behavior and its consequences and to suggest other possibilities as we see them.

And then wait for them to move. Motivated action involves their deciding that it is important for them to do something and the identification, sometimes with our assistance, of the activity they consider worthy.

There are various levels of classroom motivation. Ray Simpson, of the University of Illinois, has identified them as follows:

(a) Working because of fear.

(b) Working for extrinsic rewards (credit, marks) without understanding the purposes of the teacher.

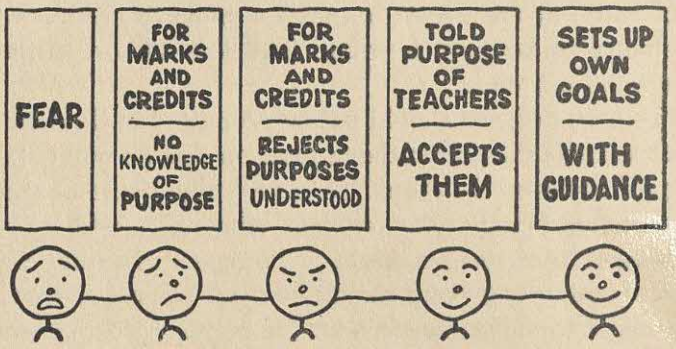
(c) Understands the purposes of the teacher, rejects them, but works to obtain the extrinsic rewards.

(d) Understands purposes of the teacher, accepts them without having any part in forming them, and works for them.

(e) Establishes goals with necessary guidance and works to achieve them.

(f) Able to clearly define goals and work for them wisely with a minimum of help from others.

We may work with pupils on any of these levels, but the chances for efficient learning are obviously greater at the higher levels (d, e, f).

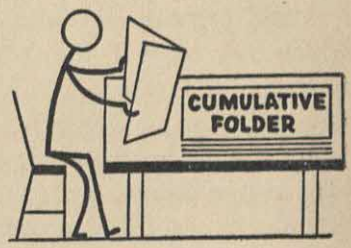


When pupils complete an activity, it is important to insure that the experience has been of positive value to them. Otherwise they will not be anxious to undertake another project on their own initiative. If we have not stopped from time to time to say, "Are we accomplishing what we agreed was important to accomplish?" the activity may leave youngsters with a sense of frustration and defeat, a feeling that classes never really accomplish anything, that they are simply talk sessions far removed from everyday living. However, if we have kept close enough contact with the students to know whether the things that are being done are the kinds of things that promote the values that they have in mind, we can be sure that the conclusion of an experience will leave the student with a desire to have further experiences in the area.

What Preliminary Planning Is Necessary?

If we are to feel secure and at ease when we face a class for the first time, we must have done serious preliminary planning.

There are many ways of planning, and they aren't all formal. As we begin our work in a new school, it is helpful to go through the community in which the school is located and to talk with the citizens. In this way we get the feel of the community and achieve some understanding of the problems that the youngsters who live there encounter. We also become familiar with the attitudes and mores of the community that will affect the living and the thinking that occur in our class. Familiarity with the community will enable us to understand references that students make to local points of interest, sly remarks about problems that they face, and the types of material and information that will prove most stimulating to them. And through our knowledge of the community, we have a picture of some of the specific interests that will undoubtedly arise in class discussion and class thinking.



But knowing the community is not enough. It is also necessary to know the different children who will be in the class as well as we can. One way we can learn about students is by reviewing their personnel folders, studying their test scores, looking at remarks that other teachers have made about them, noting their strengths, and discovering their problems.

Another step that we can take is to collect information on problems which we predict will be important to the group we will be working with. We already know something about the general needs and interests of the age-group. Pamphlets on child development, such as *How Children Develop,* published by the Ohio State University School, give a good analysis of the interests, needs, and the physical growth of the particular age-group with which we will be working. These characteristics of the age-group constitute valuable guideposts for us in selecting materials to have on hand when the class comes

together. In addition, our study of the individual folders has given us information on special interests of the boys and girls in the class. All these sources give us clues to the types of problems that will arise.

The syllabi and regulations of the system provide additional direction. The work that has been done by individuals in charge of the curriculum organization in preparing courses of study and curricula for various grade and age levels constitutes the framework within which we work. These written materials at least give us guidance and illustrate the teaching that has been customary in the school.

Also, we can give some thought to the physical appearance of the room before the students arrive. Some teachers deliberately avoid making specific arrangements because they want the boys and girls to develop the environment as a group project. They feel that if the class members set up a room and collect and organize the material and furniture in the way in which they want it, they will feel more responsibility for the room and a greater interest in what goes on. Other teachers take the point of view that it is their job to have on hand as many stimulating materials and exhibits as possible. If there is clay in one corner, a reading table in another corner, a tape recorder in a third, students will know that these are some of the types of equipment and materials that they may use. They are stimulated at the start by the possibilities of doing things with the materials. The displays of work that previous students have done or listings of questions that previous groups have undertaken to solve are other ways we can help youngsters to get some idea of the activities that may go on in the class.

Usually we shall want to have in mind several ways of getting acquainted with the students. We may not use any of them, but they're good to fall back on if nothing else suggests itself at the moment when we face the class for the first time. This is especially important for the beginning teacher who has had little experience in meeting groups.

How Do We Begin Planning with Pupils?

One of the questions we all have to face is whether or not we are going to bring pupils in on planning the program. In light of our belief that a major function of the teacher is to develop democratic values and skills, there seems to be only one answer to this question.

The only way to learn to plan is through planning, and if we want to develop democratic citizens we must bring students in on the planning. But the manner in which we proceed and the types of decisions that we share with them may vary. We will be guided here by a number of factors, including the pupils' maturity and background, and the attitudes of the community and of other staff members. However, there seems to be no valid reason not to share at least some phases of planning with students.

But teacher-pupil planning can be foolishly misinterpreted.

> A wrestling coach in a midwestern high school had been asked to teach a section of tenth-grade English. In the third month of the school year, while he was talking with the principal, he commented, "There has been so much talk about pupil-teacher planning in our faculty meetings that I have begun it in my English class. The students are helping me plan our spelling work. Last week we decided that if we did not miss more than three letters in a word we would count it right."

Here was a teacher who accepted the idea without any understanding of the reason for it or its purpose. Joint planning is not to decide whether facts are correct. We bring pupils into the planning and increase agreement on purposes to help them to develop more effective methods of problem-solving and to become more self-directing.

Even limited student participation helps. Here is what the teacher of a tenth-grade Spanish class in Connecticut has to say:

In using "La Linterna," a little paper printed entirely in Spanish which is published twice a month, I had noticed a marked drop in student interest. To arouse more interest I made the following changes in procedure.

Previously, I had read the paper first myself before distributing it to the students, and then made assignments sometimes to the class as a whole or to individual students. I tried to assign articles that I thought might have special interest for them. Evidently I must have failed—at least in some of this.

I changed this procedure to distributing the papers to the students and suggesting that we plan together what we should read either as a class or individuals. The class was slow at first to accept this suggestion but later did very well. I made a few short summaries of the articles—just enough to give them a slight idea of the subject matter. After a few weeks I decided to allow the class to do all the planning, of course, with the help and suggestions that they asked me to give. They usually were given the paper to look over by themselves, for two or three days to become acquainted with the various articles and subject matter in general. Then they reported to class ready to volunteer for the reading assignments. I was amazed and more than pleased with the very thorough way they handled this.

The result is that they now show more interest in the paper and have even done some reference and research work on some of the articles. This was done and planned entirely by the students. Although every pupil does not read the entire paper, yet they all get the information as the pupils in making their own assignments and assuming responsibility for their share of the work give what amounts to a report of the entire paper. Each one reads or translates or tells in his own words what he has read or prepared.

Immediate results are: better prepared work, better group spirit, more interest, and finally no more "lost" or "mislaid" papers.

Many students are suspicious when we begin to plan with them, especially those who have had unsatisfactory experiences

in the past with teachers who have said that they were going to share the planning. They wonder what's up. They suspect that we have developed a new way of putting something over on them. They decide that this is just another technique for getting them to do what we want them to do.

Of course, we can't force pupils to plan with us; we can only extend to them the invitation to participate when they are ready. All we can do is say, "Here is a decision that I can make. I would like for you to help me make it if you will. We'll abide by the decision that we reach as a group if you undertake to join me in this decision. Otherwise, I will have to make it for us." This attitude clearly shows that it is up to the students to decide whether or not they will enter into the planning. In the beginning, they may wisely choose not to accept the invitation. They may know how much they are willing to undertake, but they may not yet know how much faith and trust they can have in us. We may continue to extend this offer for a month or more before the students will undertake any joint planning with us.

An easy way of getting started with students in planning is to propose some method of work. Then, if they do not want to make any revision in it at the time, we can simply start to work by that method. As soon as the class has had a chance to experience the method and to find out what they consider its strengths or weaknesses, we can take time out to say, "Are we doing what we should? Is the method we are following helpful to you? Or are there changes we should make to improve it so that all of us will be happier with it and make more progress together?" Such questions bring students into an evaluation session and give them an opportunity to revise the procedure with us. It is true pupil-teacher planning.

Another way we can bring pupils into the planning is by proposing several plans of work and then letting them choose the one they like best. After they have tried their wings in carrying out some plan they themselves have chosen, they will probably be ready to develop the next plan with us.

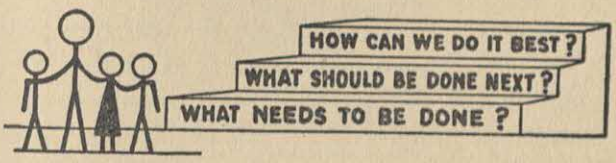
No matter what plan the group chooses, it will be revised, if we are really using group work. Whatever plan the class decides upon should be put into operation and then the members of the group can be given an opportunity to evaluate and revise it in terms of how effective they feel it to be.

A class difficulty sometimes leads to the first real acceptance of pupil-teacher planning. Here's what happened in a seventh-grade physical education class:

> On one volley ball court the arguing grew louder and louder until the umpire threw up her hands, and began screaming to be heard. It sounded like a department store full of ladies on bargain day.
>
> It was early in the year, and some new seventh-graders were trying hard to assume their role of junior high girls, but occasionally it proved too much.
>
> Across the way two other teams played, with squeals of delight and cooperation.
>
> Feeling the complete contrast of the situation, a hunch told me this might be one of their teachable moments.
>
> I called Betty, the class leader, and we watched the two games. "Looks a little like war and peace," she told me. She thought they would really laugh if they could see the contrast. We walked over to the peaceful teams, and asked them to come over and observe the other game. Then we told them to play the way they had seen the game played.
>
> After the observation, the peaceful team staged a sham ruckus. Betty ran over to the quarreling teams and asked them to watch the others play. We then called both groups together and talked about what they had seen. Each team contributed facts, and we discussed which way of playing was the most fun.

The steps in planning are very simple. They consist of deciding what needs to be done, choosing the things that should be undertaken immediately, and figuring out a plan of attack.

We make a mistake if we tell pupils that they can do anything they please during the class. Students are smart enough to see that this philosophy carried to its logical conclusion would mean that they could go fishing during class time if they so desired. Instead of telling pupils that they can do as they please, *it is our function to stress the idea that the class is a place where students can engage in activities within the field of work that are of most value to them.* We allow students to



select their own course of action provided they can prove to us that it is the most worth-while activity in which they can engage. The burden of proof rests upon them, not upon us.

When students consider a particular way of attacking a problem, we assist them by raising such questions as these: "Will it accomplish what we want? Can we do it in the time that we have? Is it better than the other solutions that we are considering?" These criteria will help any group from elementary classes through high school to determine whether or not the proposed plan of study should be the one undertaken.

Many teachers have felt that the time spent in setting up criteria by which to judge problems is wasted. They have felt that it would be easier and more helpful if they suggested to the class the criteria by which problems should be judged. Actually, the establishing of criteria to apply in selecting problems or courses of action is a form of planning, with long-range implications. The effects of even two class periods at the beginning of a year given over to establishing criteria will carry through the whole year. They are probably the most important planning periods that the group will have. Naturally, it will be necessary during the year to revise the criteria as the youngsters learn more about self-direction, but this beginning state-

ment is the level from which the group starts and the foundation on which it builds.

There are some techniques of planning that many teachers have found helpful. During our early planning sessions with the group we can talk about the interests of various members of the class. This gives the boys and girls a chance to learn about one another and to discover which classmates share their interests. It also gives the class direction in selecting the projects that will be valuable to the total group.

We can talk with the pupils about the way they would like to work. We give them a chance to say what they would like from us and the way they would like us to deal with them. And, at the same time, we have an opportunity to say, "This is how I like to work with a class and these are the relationships I like to have with students." The various points of view expressed may not be identical, but as we discuss how we like to work together, the total group is benefited. And out of the areas of common agreement may come criteria which the class will establish as rules of behavior. This procedure gives us and the pupils a chance to find out together what to expect from each other before any crisis arises.

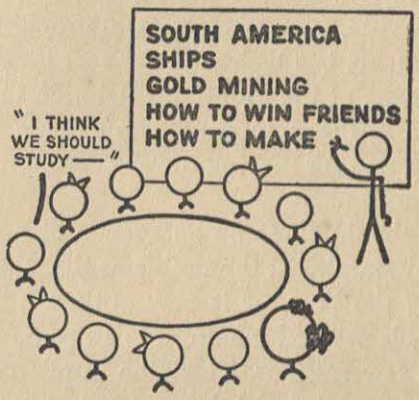
How Do We Select a Project?

In deciding what problems to study, it is helpful to take a problem census. Each student may say, "These are the problems that I would like to work on. These are the things that are important for me to learn. These are the skills that I hope to develop." Since *we too are a member of the group, we should feel free at all times to suggest problems that we believe are important.* We can mention skills and interests that other groups of similar age have found profitable.

We can encourage students to make their own decisions by asking such questions as, "Are you sure this is what we need to do? Is this the most valuable thing we can do?" When a student answers these questions, he is in effect justifying, to anyone concerned, the activity being undertaken. If, on the

other hand, we say, "This is the important thing for you to do," we are responsible for defending the activity.

As a technique for reaching group agreement, taking straw votes proves to be very helpful. Opinions are expressed through informal votes which do not commit the individual or group. For example, the class may have suggested seven topics: South America, How To Win Friends, Farm Animals, Ships, Gold Mining, Getting Along with Parents, and Japan. Through dis-



cussion, it has been found that all seven meet the criteria for study units that the class has established. A choice has to be made among them. We may suggest a straw vote in which each student may express his preference. The class accepts, with the understanding that the straw vote is for the purpose of clarifying the decisions that must be made. The vote is South America 2, How To Win Friends 10, Farm Animals 2, Ships 3, Gold Mining 12, Getting Along with Parents 3, and Japan 3. After the straw vote, the persons wishing to study South America, Farm Animals, Ships, Getting Along with Parents, and Japan are given an opportunity to present additional arguments for their preference, with the understanding that if they do not convince anyone, the choice will become a decision between studying How To Win Friends and Gold Mining. After the choice has been narrowed down, either a big majority will shift

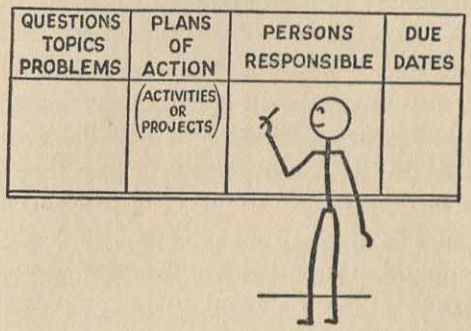
their votes to one side or the other, or else efforts will be made to reach a compromise agreement. Official votes are avoided as much as possible.

Through the use of a straw vote, it is possible for the group to gain an understanding of the general feeling about the various projects that have been suggested without making a commitment to follow any one course of action. If, after more discussion, the group comes to an agreement on what is to be done, the problem is solved. But if no consensus is reached as a result of the straw vote, more planning will probably be needed. The straw vote, then, is a technique for revealing the opinions of various members of the group, for determining which people should have further opportunity to explain the proposals they have made, and for moving toward consensus on the ultimate course of action.

Every group should agree on an agenda or a plan of work. The agenda may simply list the problems that the group wants to study during the year, or it may outline a more detailed schedule. Most classes find it helpful to agree on only one project at the first few sessions. Then the pupils concentrate on that problem for a while until they get to know each other and develop a deeper understanding of the field being investigated. Later on, when they feel ready, they may decide to establish a long-range schedule for the remaining portion of their time together. But some classes never move beyond scheduling the problem to be studied next. They feel that it is better not to establish a long-term agenda because the work on the present problem may lead to greater insight into the things that need to be done next.

In any case, whether only one problem is agreed upon or the agenda for the total year or semester is established, the class needs to have a definite plan of work, with agreement on actual dates for the completion of various tasks. This agreement on completion dates is vitally important. As discussed in the previous chapter, deadlines serve as a control for students and help them determine how deeply they can go into a problem.

In addition, they relieve us of the task of pushing students to work faster. Deadlines established by the class constitute a contract among the members and promote self-discipline. As a class group reaches agreement on what is to be done, when and by whom, each individual or small committee has a responsibility to the class, not to us. Although the class is controlled and directed, the control comes from the class agreement on



assigned jobs with deadlines. When planning arrives at this point, the class has moved out of the pattern of teacher-domination.

Pupils will be expected to honor this contract until they work out an agreement for change. Adjustment and changes in the plan must be cleared with the class.

After a class has developed a plan, freedom of movement is necessary to carry it out. During the planning stage we work with the total group, but as soon as a plan is agreed upon that includes individual projects or committee activities, students need to be free to engage in the activities they have planned.

During the work period the class is in effect a workshop where we can work with individuals or with groups that need help. We serve as a resource person, moving from group to group and giving help whenever the students request it or we see it is needed. We do not hesitate to move voluntarily into any situation in which the students seem to have lost their sense of direction. That is a part of our guidance function—

spotting difficulties and helping students surmount them without being deflected from their course. We do it by asking questions that contrast what students are doing with the plans they have made or questions that suggest other possibilities.

As we work with students, we stress that information is to be *used*, that it is not to be memorized as an end in itself. Research experiments have proved that we forget within two years 70 to 90 per cent of the facts we learn. The deeper our involvement with facts, the longer we remember them. And we become intimately familiar with facts only when we use them to carry out specific purposes.

Through planning, students should gain an understanding of the responsibility that knowledge brings. As long as we do not know, we have no responsibility. But as soon as we do know certain facts and become aware of their implications, we either have to do something about them or else lose our integrity as individuals. Boys and girls need to develop that concept in their work with the class. The way we use knowledge is more important than the particular knowledge that we acquire. If boys and girls conceive of facts as something that they can learn, write down on paper, get a mark on, and then forget about, their learning is pointless. If, however, they find that becoming informed about something brings with it the responsibility to live in terms of that knowledge, then learning has purpose, has meaning, and affects behavior.

Living up to our knowledge is a responsibility of the teacher as well as of the student. For example, we may tell boys and girls that they should wash their hands before they eat as a precaution against disease. If, later on, they see us fail to wash our own hands, they will conclude that knowledge does not mean accepting responsibility.

The class schedule should provide for work to be done by both large and small groups, and also by individual students. It is a mistake to assume that all the work can be done by the total class. Individuals want time to work by themselves, to explore individual problems, to work on individual skills, and

to follow their own reading tastes. The class may reject our suggestion that time be provided for these individual pursuits. And we should accept their rejection at that point. But during subsequent evaluation sessions we will again want to raise the question, even though it is voted down. *Our role is to suggest the best we know and to help the group decide whether our suggestion and others will improve their living and working.*

In any planning situation we help by insisting on a definite plan of action. Such a plan gives students security in their relationships with us and in their relationships with other people, as well as within themselves. They know what is expected of them and they know where they are going.

This approach to deciding how a class should work is in line with all that we know about efficient learning. We know that efficient learning occurs when the learner is involved in setting up purposes that are real to him, in selecting means of achieving those purposes, and in interpreting and evaluating his experiences.

Planning together is the process of answering these questions: "What do we hope to gain? How should we go about it? How will we measure the progress that we have made? How will we use the facts and information and skills that we have gained?"

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Utilize the motivations that pupils already have.
2. Study each individual to discover his motivations.
3. Insure working with pupil motivation by bringing pupils in on the planning.
4. Allow as many types of activities in the class as it is possible to accommodate.
5. In pre-planning, study the community, the pupils' cumulative folders, the reports of interests and needs of the age-group taught, and the local course of study.
6. Plan several ways of starting work, but be willing to change them.

7. Invite pupils to assist in planning the work of the group and keep the invitation open until they are ready to accept it.

8. If students hesitate to participate in planning, propose a method of work and ask them to suggest improvements.

9. Discuss with the group the way members like to work.

10. Formulate with the class a set of criteria to apply in deciding what to study.

11. Use straw votes as a technique for helping a group reach consensus.

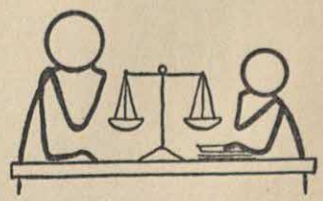
12. Agree on an agenda and a plan of work that will serve as a framework to give the pupils and teacher security and guidance.

13. Secure agreement on deadlines for the execution of the various phases of the plan.

14. Consider a plan of work as a contract that both students and teacher are to follow unless agreement to change is reached by the parties involved.

15. Suggest a schedule of work that permits both individual and group work.

Teaching Is Skill in Evaluation



Chapter 9

What Is Evaluation?

Evaluation, when conducted under favorable conditions, is the key to intelligent pupil-teacher-parent planning.

Evaluation and marking are not synonymous. Too frequently, when a discussion of the evaluation of pupil work is begun, people begin to talk about "A," "B," "C," "D," and "F," or raise questions such as, "Should the passing level be put at 65 per cent or 70 per cent?" They are thinking in terms of marking, not evaluation.

Evaluation is a much broader concept than marking. It is a process by which those concerned with goals, processes, and programs may collect data, make judgments, and revise as necessary.

In this chapter we shall examine the difference between marking and evaluation, the principles of evaluation, and how the evaluative process can be applied.

What Are Marks?

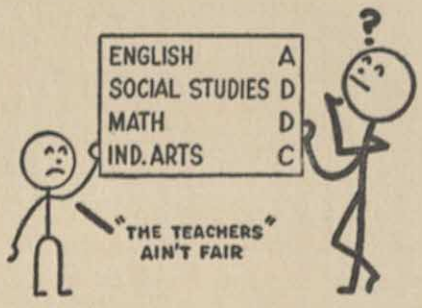
Marking is a procedure by which a teacher tells a pupil and his parents how well the child is succeeding. As a reporting device, marks have many shortcomings.

Marks, in a great majority of cases, are comparative ratings. They compare the accomplishment of one pupil with the accomplishment of other pupils. Although there has been some effort to use marks to report a pupil's individual progress, little real acceptance of the practice has been achieved. To students and parents, a high mark has meant high standing in the class. To get them to accept a different interpretation, in which a

high mark indicates the most progress regardless of final standing, has been extremely difficult.

In general, marks are assigned on the basis of the pupil's final standing in a class. The highest students get "A's" or percentage marks in the 90's, and students lower in standing receive marks correspondingly farther down the scale. It has been a rather common assumption that the pupils with the lowest standings in the class should receive failing marks.

When marks are based on relative standing, it is quite possible for the youngster who has made the least progress to receive the highest mark in the class. For example, suppose that an achievement test in American history is given at the beginning of a course. Ben Jones makes a score of 89 out of a possible 100 points, and no other member of the class scores over 75 points. It would be altogether possible for Ben to do no work in the course and to still come out with a score of 89



on the re-test. And, if no other student is able to raise his score above 85 on the re-test, Ben will still be the top student in the class and will receive the highest mark. Such a procedure does not take into consideration the progress or the initiative of the student. Sally Smith may have made 40 on the first test and 80 on the re-test, but she will still not equal Ben's achievement in terms of final score, and her mark in the course will not be as high. If Jack Hunter scores 5 on the pre-test and 50 on the re-test, he may fail the course because he has received the low-

est final mark, even though he has made a greater gain in test score than either Ben or Sally.

Marks do not tell the student or his parents how much progress he is making.

Some teachers justify marking on the basis that our society is competitive and that youngsters should be trained to compete with others in order to become effective participants in our society. Such an argument overlooks all the cooperative aspects of present-day society. Moreover, it is false in the premise that competitiveness provides the best preparation. In schools where success is reported to parents in terms of class standing, the mark becomes the pupils' objective rather than learning or mastering skills and subject matter. Interest in the subject is supplanted by interest in obtaining a high mark. Sad to relate, the result is that pupils become less interested in the whole experience. Youngsters with high intelligence become bored because the highest mark is so easy to obtain. Children in the lowest portion of the class become disinterested because they have no hope of attaining a mark that will be regarded as successful by the school or by their parents. Only those children on the borderline between passing and failure, or those who are striving for honors which they find difficult to attain, can be strongly motivated by comparative marks. Marking on a comparative basis creates emotional tension and it fails to provide motivation for many of the students.

Comparative marks tend to build an intellectual snobbery based on position without performance. For the students with superior intelligence, the homage they receive—honor roll, membership in honor societies, and class scholarship awards—comes without real effort. It is easy for students living in such an environment to assume that recognition is their due.

But the students aren't the only ones who are deceived. Parents may be misled as well. If their child receives the highest marks in all his classes, they feel that he is showing evidence of superior work. Actually, he may or may not be performing conscientiously. He may have found it possible to lead his

classes without difficulty, because of previous learning experiences or greater natural ability. Other children, meanwhile, find to their sorrow that the system also works in reverse. No matter how many hours of diligent effort they spend, they are never able to take a respectable report to their parents.

Marks fail to report many important kinds of progress. Although the coverage of stated teaching objectives may be very broad, including attitudes, skills, character, and group participation, marking for the most part is based on the student's ability to acquire subject-matter information. Since attitudes, appreciations, and interests are difficult to measure, most teachers choose to base their marks on scores made in subject-matter information tests. They know that they will have to justify the marks, and scores on subject-matter tests provide definite evidence which parents, pupils, and the administration will accept. By filling a grade book with marks earned in quizzes and examinations, the teacher is able to award a final mark which he can justify by totaling the scores and dividing by the number of tests to find an average which falls between two percentage points that have been arbitrarily designated by the administration as the limits for a certain mark. Usually no question is raised about the assumption that the test items were of equal importance or about the omission of other types of growth.

Under these conditions, although teachers talk about developing good citizenship and the skills of working with people, students do not take them seriously. Since the report that goes home to a student's parents is based on his effectiveness in acquiring subject-matter information, that becomes the only valid objective for him. As long as marks are based on subject-matter test scores, any other objectives stated by teachers will be regarded as only window-dressing by the students.

Where marks are based on test scores as described above, it is assumed that the marking of the tests is reliable. Actually it is not.

Experiments in which different teachers have marked the

same paper reveal that teacher ratings vary greatly. An English composition, for example, may receive marks ranging from "A" to "F." Even an examination paper in arithmetic may be assigned scores varying from 95 to 35 unless the raters have agreed on the exact criteria to apply. And certainly teachers have never agreed on criteria for various types and levels of pupil work.

Actually, marks are relatively meaningless because of the great variation in standards from class to class and from school to school. Some school systems have a student enrollment with an average I.Q. of 115. Others have an average of 95. Obviously, an "A" mark in the second school system may be equal to only a "C" mark in the first. Some schools set high scholastic standards; others do not put so much emphasis on achievement. Naturally, high marks in a school of low scholastic standards do not mean the same as high marks in a school of high scholastic standards. But the person interpreting a transcript or a report card is often unaware of the standards in the school where the marks were given.

The same fallacy holds with regard to marking within a single school system. Some teachers require less work of their students than do others. Their courses become known as "crip" courses, and students who are more concerned with the marks they receive than with the quality of their education flock to the easy instructors. Unfortunately, these students are being encouraged to sacrifice long-range educational benefits for the immediate success that comes with high, month-by-month marks. Naturally, they want to be as successful as possible. And if success happens to be measured in terms of marks, they concentrate their efforts on getting the highest marks they can. Even where agreement has been reached among the teachers of a faculty on the percentage mark that will be considered passing or good, individual differences among teachers leave each mark assigned open to question.

Immediately after World War I, when the test and measurement movement became important in American education,

teachers became very much concerned about making their marking scientific. Statisticians introduced the concept of the normal curve, and many school systems began to insist that teachers make the marks they assigned conform to it. In some cases, the school administration gave instructions that no more than 5 per cent of the marks in any class should be "A's," 15 per cent "B's," 60 per cent "C's," 15 per cent "D's," and 5 per cent "F's."

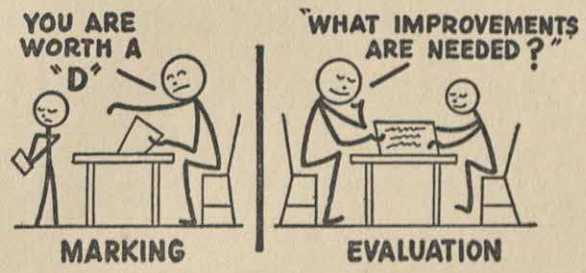
What many of these school administrators and teachers did not understand was that the normal curve is a theoretical concept based on a statistical treatment of several thousand cases selected at random. Any group of less than this number should not be expected to fall into a normal curve. Neither should any group of several thousand persons not selected at random. No single school in America has included thousands of pupils in a group being marked. Nor is the population of most schools selected at random. For example, a school in a suburban residential district has children from homes with special opportunities for cultural activities and is not representative of the total population. Neither would the cultural background of the children in a depressed area of one of our large cities meet the random-sampling criteria.

By attempting to force the marks of an above-average or a below-average class into the framework of the normal curve, the teacher is creating an abnormal situation that penalizes many of the students. In some groups, 90 per cent of the class may do exceptionally fine work; in other classes 90 per cent may do inadequate work as judged by the teacher's standards. Putting the marks of either group into the framework of a normal curve makes for unscientific marking rather than for the scientific marking that educators sought.

Marking is an ineffective procedure for reporting pupil growth to pupils and parents. It focuses attention on final achievement rather than on the amount of progress made in the period reported; it establishes artificial goals which fail to increase motivation for the majority of students and stimulates

some to select a lower-quality education in order to achieve the immediate symbols of success; it leads parents and some teachers to assume a reliability and scientific basis that are not present.

Most of us are concerned about the ineffectiveness of present marking procedures. We are struggling to find ways of ascertaining progress in areas of growth other than the acquisition of subject matter, and ways of revealing this progress to parents and pupils. We feel we have restricted ourselves un-



necessarily by using letters or percentages to describe pupil progress when we have the whole language to explain the work pupils are doing. We believe that more can be gained by concentrating on securing evidence about pupil growth as a way of improving pupil experiences than by making judgments about the status of a pupil at a given moment. The evaluative process offers promise of improving the present situation on all these counts.

What Is the Evaluative Process?

The evaluative process is a tool to use in making intelligent decisions. Any individual or group is confronted daily with many choices concerning what is important to do and how to do it. The courses of action selected may be determined on the basis of whim, prejudice, emotion, physical condition, or by flipping a coin. But such decisions are not likely to be intelligent. The evaluative process has been devised to help the in-

dividual or group clarify purposes, collect evidence, and make judgments as a basis for more intelligent choices and planning.

Any judgment is an evaluation. We look at a new car and say, "It has good lines." Or we sit in a chair and exclaim, "My, this chair is comfortable." But casual evaluations may be inaccurate. *The evaluative process is a carefully developed method for making more valid judgments concerning ways of improving the learning situation.* Certain principles which have been evolved to make the process more effective will be described in the following paragraphs.

Evaluation is a continuous process. It begins from the first moment we start to plan with a group, and it is continued for as long as the group continues to make decisions. If evaluation is postponed to the time when the group is about to break up, it becomes relatively useless. Such evaluation enables members of the group to review their experience and to assess the judgments they made during their time together, but it does not permit improvement of that experience while it is still in progress. The only function of evaluation performed at the end of the semester or the year is to assist us in providing more satisfying experiences for future groups or to assist the students themselves in planning their future educational experiences.

But when evaluation is a continuous process, it can be used *to judge objectives as well as the amount of pupil growth.* The direction of growth is as important as the degree of growth. Evaluation involves looking at the objectives and deciding whether or not they are the ones for which the students should be working in terms of their needs, their ambitions, and their social environment. Every objective of the group or of the individual should meet these criteria.

When the evaluative process is used, experiences and method, as well as objectives, are subject to constant revision. A change in purpose will necessitate revision of the experiences the group has planned. And so will the discovery of lack of pupil growth in the direction of desired goals. If a class is seeking to understand the local city government by reading the textbook and pamphlets published by local authorities and discovers after a few weeks that its understanding is superficial, it may change its program of activities to include visits to various departments of the government, and it may decide to invite city employees and officials to come to the class to explain their work.

The evaluative process requires appraisal of pupil performance at various stages of the work. It is necessary to compare the quality of work a student is doing at the beginning of an activity with the quality of his work at successive stages of the program. By this procedure, it is possible to tell whether the student is making real and continuous progress or whether he is making progress only at special times. Lack of continuous growth may mean wasted time. For example, if we give a test to a class studying American history only at the end of a unit of work, a student may make a high score, leading us to assume that the total experience has been profitable for him. Such may not be the case. He may already have had an extensive reservoir of information at the beginning of the unit. Or, by studying hard at the beginning of the activity, he may have acquired the necessary information and then loafed during the remainder of the period of study. But continuous evaluation permits us to determine when the activity is becoming unprofitable for a given student and to assist him in revising his program.

Everyone involved in the situation—pupils, parents, teacher, and administrators—*should be a part of the evaluative process.* The amount of change can be determined by individuals—the teacher or a pupil—but the judgments about the amount of change must be made by all.

To determine change is relatively easy. It merely involves

getting a sample of pupil behavior at two different dates. Making judgments about the amount or direction of change depends upon the values, purposes, and insights of the persons making the judgments. If only one person is involved, making judgments may be easy, but when several persons, such as the pupil, teacher, parents, and maybe other class members, participate, the process becomes complicated because of different purposes held by various individuals.

Actually, everyone participates in the evaluative process, whether we want them to or not. If we are skillful, we will devise situations for obtaining these judgments and using them to improve the class work. But if we pretend we can ignore them, we will find that we have missed an opportunity to build group spirit and a solid backing for class activity. By sharing the evaluation with students and parents, we can insure more valid judgments from everyone concerned, simply because everyone will be provided with the pertinent information and will be familiar with the important purposes of the group.

To illustrate, a visit of a fifth-grade class to Washington's Monument may result in growth which satisfies the pupils and teacher. But it may be considered a waste of time by a parent who believes the sole function of the class is to teach the 3 R's.

All persons involved in the situation being judged should have a part in establishing the criteria by which it will be evaluated.

If we want the most efficient learning situation, parents must have a part in establishing the criteria by which progress is judged. Their desires, attitudes, and feelings condition pupil learning. If they participate in establishing the criteria, they are more likely to subscribe to them, thereby enhancing the learning situation. But if they have no part in the planning, they may resent or misunderstand the criteria that are set up. Although they cannot participate in the evaluation of each activity, they can be brought into the planning of the type of pupil growth sought during the year. And these agreements represent the parents' point of view in any specific evaluation.

Certainly the students themselves play an important part in the evaluative process. With us, they will decide on the goals they seek and on the most promising methods of reaching them. And as they work toward their goals, they will stop from time to time to ascertain their progress and the effectiveness of their work procedures.

> In one Alabama school, for example, each pupil, in cooperation with his teacher, works out a plan of work. At designated stages, he writes a description of his progress and outlines the steps he proposes to take next. Then the pupil and the teacher sit down and discuss the report, until they have reached agreement on the amount and quality of the progress that has been made. A copy of each report is also sent to the pupil's parents for their comments.

Encouraging students to participate in evaluation is valuable for reasons beyond the immediate situation. It stimulates them to develop their powers of self-direction, among other things. By encouraging them to establish objectives for themselves, and criteria for judging their own performance, we help build up the confidence and self-reliance that will enable them to plan their behavior wisely and intelligently.

Excluding pupils from the evaluative process will almost certainly render it worthless. We lose the information they can contribute. If their purposes are ignored, the criteria established may be meaningless and unimportant to them. If they see no value in the standards by which an experience or growth is judged, they will reject the judgment made and the judge as well. If we face reality, we have to admit that many students, particularly in high school, have very little respect for our judgment. They reject our judgment in matters of clothing, records, movies, cars, dance bands, and many of the other items that they feel are really important in their daily lives. They are willing to accept our judgment only in matters relatively remote from their everyday experience. Listen to a group of high-school pupils discussing the marks they have received. "I got a 'C' but you know how Miss Brown is. If she happens to like the

way your hair curls you get an 'A' but if she doesn't, you know what happens."

One of the major reasons that students accept our judgments is that we have control over something they want. In the elementary school it may be adult approval. In the secondary school, the desired objective may be a diploma, entrance to college, or making the honor roll, for which the student will receive a certain amount of prestige. If these motivations are strong enough, the pupils will seek to obtain a high rating from us. If these drives are not strong, the students will make little effort to secure a favorable judgment from us.

Because our judgments are not accepted as important or valid by students except as they contribute to the obtaining of some goal, many pupils seek to obtain a satisfactory mark by as little effort as possible. It is rather common practice for students to try to "get by" as to put into a class just sufficient quality of work that will be acceptable, instead of making the greatest possible growth they can make in the class. So long as judgment-making remains a function of the teacher, it will be accepted seriously by the students only as it either endangers or advances their personal objectives.

The evaluative process gives to the opportunity to get students to take school work seriously. As we provide them a share in deciding what is best and through that participation assume responsibility for the success of the decision, we increase the probability that judgments concerning their growth will be meaningful to them, we increase the efficiency of the learning process. When the evaluative process is applied to the growth of the individual, the judgments made are in terms of his progress, his previous status, his ability, his interests, and his assets and liabilities. For the individual, evaluation is not a mechanical comparison of one student with another, or of a class with a national norm. Behavior that is considered unsatisfactory for one student may indicate real progress for another. For example, a teacher in one of the writer's classes came to him after her class session in which she had been

working on a committee composed of four white people and three Negroes. She said, "You know, some of these Negroes are as intelligent as I am. I have never had an opportunity before to associate with such Negroes." This girl was not willing to admit that the Negroes in her home state were as intelligent as she was, but she had progressed to the point where she felt that some Negroes, in the proper environment, could be. This new awareness marked real progress for her. Her early attitude might have represented retrogression for other students in the same committee. Judgments are made on the quality of an individual's progress toward the type of behavior sought by referring to his previous condition, the time available, and other conditioning factors in the environment.

In brief, evaluation is a device for helping an individual or a class to become self-directing. It assists in the establishment of definite goals, which in turn serve as criteria for judging change. It provides techniques for collecting evidence on which to make judgments. It is the foundation from for further planning. By helping students master the process of evaluation, we help them become less dependent on others.

The essential element in effective evaluation is the assumption that the evaluative process is a tool for helping the individual or group to control and improve their environment. We are not the evaluators, we assist in the evaluative process. Whenever we make judgments about the inadequacy of people because they are not making the growth we think they should or making in the environment, we are stopping the evaluative process. We make difficult continued planning for more growth. We

lose the constructive feature of the evaluative process when we focus on labeling the individual rather than on centering our attention on how to change the environment to make possible more pupil growth.

When Can the Evaluative Process Be Applied?

The evaluative process described cannot be used in our classroom unless certain conditions prevail. These may have to be established gradually over a period of time.

Evaluation is effective only when students want to improve. In working with boys and girls, we do not usually have to worry about stimulating a desire for improvement or a belief that improvement is possible. They are striving constantly to improve and are certain they can become whatever they wish. But if pupils have had experiences which have discouraged them and destroyed their self-confidence, we may find it necessary to focus at first on stimulating desire to establish goals, and on developing a belief that attainment is possible.

Pupil-teacher planning which arrives at agreement on goals and activities is the first step in evaluation. We help the group during planning sessions by asking such questions as:

Have we decided upon long-term and immediate goals?
Have we established a plan of action?
Has the responsibility of each class member been defined?
Have we set deadlines for ourselves?
Have we agreed upon a method of working together?

These questions are designed to help a class establish a plan definite enough to permit an estimate of subsequent progress. The answers to these questions in the first planning session are not final. They may need to be revised later in terms of the class experience in carrying out the plan.

We further the evaluative process if we raise additional questions as the work progresses:

Are we meeting our deadlines?
Do we need to revise our plan of work?

Is each member fulfilling his accepted responsibilities?
Is there a need for revision of assigned responsibilities?
Do we need to revise our time schedule?
Should our goals be revised?

How Important Is Rapport?

The evaluative process depends on real rapport among all members of the group.

Honest self-evaluation is a process engaged in only by persons who feel secure in their status, in their relationships with one another, in their ability, and in the possibility of making progress. Whenever the actions taken in the name of evaluation cause students to feel inadequate, deprive them of the right to participate in student activities, or create jealousy and antagonism, the attempts are doomed to failure. We can hope to have students be honest with themselves and with us about their growth and their plans only as we use the evaluative process as a tool for improving the work situation for all.

Part of our job is to help students see evaluation as a way of getting more satisfaction out of school work. They will not want to engage in evaluation if they feel that the results may be harmful to them. Many of their experiences with competitive marking will lead them to avoid any discussion of evaluation. They are suspicious and resentful whenever the subject is broached.

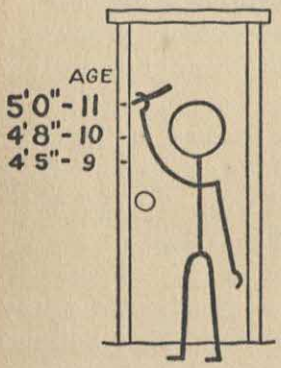
In some classes, we may decide not to mention evaluation for the first month. A basis of mutual trust and respect must be built before it is possible to discuss a topic about which many persons are sensitive because of past experiences. We can begin early, however, to evaluate group plans and group work procedures together.

How Is Growth Determined?

The application of the evaluative process requires the establishment of a baseline, since in order to determine progress it is necessary to know the starting point. The initial status of the

class or individual must be accurately recorded. Otherwise, an inaccurate original estimate or sheer forgetfulness may delude us into assuming a false amount of growth. In either case, the entire evaluation becomes a meaningless process. A relatively complete picture of existing conditions at the baseline date is essential.

As a group or individual evaluates an experience, it is necessary to determine the amount of change that has occurred in the direction of the group goals since the baseline was established. How does the class differ *now* from what it was at the *previous date*? For example, if the class is working on improving its skill in oral communication, a tape recording of a class discussion at the beginning of the year could serve as a baseline, and recordings made later in the semester could be used to determine the amount of progress made.



The success of the evaluative process depends on a thorough understanding and acceptance by all persons involved of the criteria to be used in making judgments.

Actually, the purposes that the group establishes are the real criteria by which its work should be judged, but it may be necessary to formulate even more specific standards for analyzing progress. Defining objectives in terms of observable pupil behavior is a helpful step. As long as objectives are stated only in a generalized way—such as improving citizenship—evaluation remains intangible and haphazard. But we can be more definite. For example, citizenship can be defined in terms of such observable behavior as:

(1) Taking part in student government.
(2) Volunteering to serve on committees.
(3) Assisting in the planning of class work.

(4) Contributing to school welfare collections.
(5) Serving as a member of the school safety patrol.

When citizenship is defined in such simple terms, it is easy to ascertain whether or not progress is being made by any individual student. If his participation is increasing, we know he is growing. By defining the type of growth desired for an individual pupil, we can obtain concrete evidence of his growth. We know what to record.

When objectives are defined in terms of behavior, it becomes clear in many cases that evidence can be obtained by means other than paper-and-pencil tests. For instance, if we are seeking to promote more harmony among races and religions, we cannot evaluate our success by finding out how much youngsters know about the cultural contributions of other races or religions. Rather, we must define the phrase "promoting more harmony among races and religions" in such terms as (a) working effectively together on committees, (b) exhibiting friendliness toward members of other races or religions, (c) giving recognition for their accomplishments, and (d) working to decrease discriminatory practices in the school and community. We will look for indications of our success in the everyday actions of boys and girls, both in and out of school. The problem of how to record the behavior observed will be discussed in the next chapter.

After stating a goal sought, the class, with the aid of the teacher, needs to go further and describe varying degrees of the attainment of it. For example, if the class wants to become familiar with the music of the world, learning songs from the current popular and semi-classical selections and the folk songs of several countries is a higher attainment than learning the same number of folk ballads of one country. Or, if the class is attempting to apply the scientific method, using the method in solving personal problems, school problems, and science problems represents a higher level of proficiency than following the scientific procedure in the science laboratory alone. Of course,

these gradations represent only the writer's opinion. A teacher and a class might make a different definition of levels which that group would use to determine desirable direction of growth.

It is difficult to interpret evidence unless we agree on the degree of attainment represented by various types of behavior. For example, we are seeking to develop ability to live harmoniously with others at the fourth-grade level and see the following behaviors:

—Jack voluntarily accepts responsibility for bringing books for his committee from the library.
—Jane volunteers to wash the blackboards for the teacher and the class.
—Michael stopped a fight between two boys on the playground.
—Sam stopped and let the girls enter the cafeteria before he did.
—Larry suggested that a hostess be appointed to greet visitors.

How do we tell which indicates the highest attainment? Is engaging in a wider variety of these activities what we are seeking? Is having pupils do one of them more frequently our goal? Does stopping the fight represent greater insight and skill than suggesting the appointment of a hostess? A part of defining the behavior sought is agreeing with the class on the degree of attainment various actions indicate. Establishing certain categories of behavior which represent degrees of progress toward a goal enables us to interpret anecdotal records and to determine the stage in development a pupil has reached. However, in evaluation these standards do not remain fixed. As a group gains more understanding and insight, it will re-define the standards it sets for itself and its members.

It should be pointed out that making judgments concerning progress does not mean classifying the pupils. Suppose we are striving to get eight-year-old pupils to assume responsibility for

keeping the room clean without being told. Tommy cleaned up his work area three times out of ten last week and four times out of nine this week. Is Tommy a failure, a success, or what? It is not necessary to label him. On the basis of the evidence available, Tommy is improving. We do not need to compare him with the rest of the class to decide whether we should continue to work on this behavior or whether the procedure being used can be improved. His goal becomes one of excelling his present rate of performance.

Why Keep Records?

Only through the collection of many and varied samples of a pupil's behavior are sound judgments to be made in the evaluative process. If it were possible, the most valid evaluation of a student's growth would involve a description of his total activities and an application of the criteria established for judging behavior to his total behavior. Since a complete description of a person's behavior is manifestly impossible, it is necessary to sample intelligently.

The samples taken should be determined by the type of objectives for which the class or individual is working. If the samples recorded indicate growth toward only one objective, the evaluation will be incomplete and unsatisfactory. Therefore, an evaluation program which includes only subject-matter tests is inadequate in a class which has additional objectives. In evaluation we make an attempt to measure all the types of pupil growth we are seeking to produce, no matter how difficult the process. Samples may include products such as drawings or themes, statements, test scores, indications of attitudes and interests, and descriptions of behavior.

Once the group has agreed on the type of behavior it is seeking, the next step is to decide upon situations that will reveal either the presence or absence of that behavior. We have all followed this practice in determining a pupil's mastery of subject matter. A pupil shows his knowledge or lack of knowledge in daily, weekly, or term examinations, or in a class dis-

cussion. We can be equally definite in selecting situations to check other types of growth.

> For example, the —— High School in Alabama sought to develop the pupils' ability to plan their work. The core teachers and pupils decided that a pupil should be able to plan his own work and to plan with a group. In determining ways of evaluating this type of growth, records were made of a pupil's actions in his own planning and in class periods when the group planned together. Minutes were kept of the group planning sessions and each pupil maintained a file of his individual plans. By examining the minutes and the individual plans which were collected during a year, it was possible to obtain evidence of each pupil's growth in ability to plan.

It is not always possible to determine the results of a learning experience immediately. For example, a ninth-grade pupil sees a movie such as "Grapes of Wrath." The results of his experience may not become evident until many years later, when he decides to vote in a certain way. On the other hand, it may result immediately in a strong attitude change of very short duration. We cannot assume that immediate results will have a long-range carry-over. In terms of society, the type of adult produced by the school is more important than the immediate personal change within an individual. Samples of long-term behavior will come too late for us to make improvements with a given class. We will want to be tentative in our judgments concerning our method until we have had the opportunity to see some of the long-term results of our teaching.

We can, however, get some indication of the out-of-school carry-over by devising with pupils ways of recording their home behavior. Tooth-brushing charts, logs of radio listening, and diaries are samples of such techniques.

Once the type and amount of change have been determined, the group or individual is ready to make judgments on it. If no change has occurred, the judgment is obvious. If some change has been effected, the group must decide whether or not that progress is satisfactory in light of existing conditions.

The evaluative process can be applied successfully when: the teacher and students have agreed on goals sought; rapport has been established; all persons involved understand and accept the criteria used; behavior about which judgments are made is adequately sampled and recorded. When these conditions exist, the evaluative process is the best method yet developed for increasing the efficiency of the learning situation.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Evaluate goals as well as pupil growth, method, and materials.
2. Conduct frequent evaluations.
3. Bring all persons involved, *including pupils,* into the establishing of the criteria, purposes, and standards by which progress will be evaluated.
4. Consider past progress and conditioning factors in the environment in making judgments concerning the quality of a pupil's growth.
5. Build mutual respect before introducing the evaluative process.
6. Utilize pupil-teacher planning as the first step in evaluation.
7. Use the goals established as criteria for judging progress.
8. Discover a pupil's status as soon as possible after starting to work with him. Establish a baseline from which amount of change can be determined.
9. Define purposes in terms of pupil behavior.
10. Secure varied samples of pupil behavior, including out-of-school actions.
11. Bring all persons involved, *including pupils,* into making judgments about the progress that has been made.
12. Use evidence collected concerning pupil growth as evidence in judging the quality of the learning experience.

Chapter 10

How Do We Use the Evaluative Process?

Evaluation is the process of making judgments that are used as a basis for additional planning. It consists of establishing goals, collecting and recording evidence concerning progress or lack of progress toward goals, making judgments based on that evidence, and revising procedures and goals in light of the judgments. It is a procedure for improving the product, the process, and even the goals themselves.

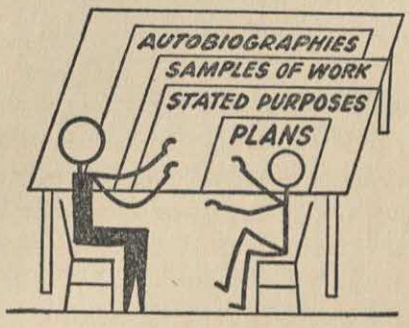
Ways of establishing goals with pupils have been discussed extensively in Chapter 8, "How Do We Plan with the Group?" Procedures for conducting the other steps in the evaluative process will be explored in this chapter.

How Do We Collect Evidence of Growth?

If we are to know how much desirable growth is taking place, we must know what pupils are like when we start to work with them. And we must also help them to obtain an accurate picture of themselves. As stated in the previous chapter, what a pupil is as we begin work together constitutes the baseline for evaluation, and change from this baseline is the evidence on which judgments are based.

What pupils tell us about themselves, the autobiographies they write, the information in their cumulative folders, samples of their work during the first weeks in our class, the purposes they state, the skills they exhibit, all are baseline data. Information collected the first few weeks we are with a group is essential to the evaluation process.

In working with youngsters in a classroom, it is not difficult to locate evidence of the learning that is occurring. The difficulty lies in how to isolate, how to collect, and how to interpret it. Every movement of a child, every action he makes within the group, is an evidence of learning that is in progress, because learning occurs in every experience a youngster has. It may be the learning that we hope for, or it may be learnings that are completely opposed to our purposes and objectives.



It would be impossible to record all the learnings that occur in any situation. And it is difficult to record even those learnings that are in the direction of the type of growth we hope to see. We will be overwhelmed by the quantity unless we help pupils designate the particular types of growth desired and then devise techniques for recording and interpreting the changes that occur.

We agree on the types of growth desired as we plan with pupils. Unless agreement on desired outcomes is reached, the evaluative process cannot work. We will be unable to secure the assistance of pupils in collecting evidence on which to base judgments.

Merely stating the growth desired is not enough. It is necessary to go further, and discuss the kinds of behavior which represent that growth. The behavior will vary from grade to grade. If skill in collecting information is the type of growth sought, a third-grade class may agree that they want to learn

how to get a book out of the library, how to use the index of a book, how to ask questions, how to read better. A ninth-grade class with the same objective might decide it means improved skill in reading the newspaper, greater discrimination in weighing contrasting reports of the same events, or more rewarding techniques in interviewing persons in the community. Without these definitions of purpose in terms of behavior, neither we nor the pupils may recognize progress when it actually occurs.

The faculty of a twelve-year school described getting pupils to assume responsibility in the terms of the following behaviors:

First Grade—Ball from playground rolled into school garden and knocked down a stick used to mark the radishes. Boy went after the ball and replaced the stick.

Second Grade—The play period had not gone well. The leaders of the small group games came to the teacher and asked if they could talk over their physical education period.

Third Grade—Students accept responsibility without being told. Examples are:
"I cut enough book marks to last for a long time."
"I saw these scissors in the wrong box and changed them."
"I'm late because I saw the ball outside and brought it in."

Fourth Grade—A boy volunteered to lead the class devotional.

Eighth Grade—Class continued work alone when teacher was called to the doctor's office.

Ninth Grade—A committee working on recreation in the community found some information they felt the class should have. They prepared a bulletin board display and put it on the board without consulting the teacher.

The class became concerned about attitudes of county commissioners who opposed establishment of a juvenile court. Began to plan action they could take.

Tenth Grade—(Home Economics) Pupils participate in planning the class procedure. A central planning committee, composed of one representative from each work committee, plans with the teacher.

Eleventh Grade—(Science) A book was mutilated. Teacher called the problem to the attention of the class and left. When he returned the class had collected money to pay for the book.

In this school the behavior examples cited indicate that the faculty sees at least seven gradations of responsibility.

(1) Carrying out directions of teachers.
(2) Doing things that need to be done and claiming credit.
(3) Volunteering for service to the group.
(4) Seeing something that needs to be done and doing it without telling teacher or claiming credit.
(5) Going ahead when teacher is absent.
(6) Establishing regular channels for planning and administration.
(7) Becoming concerned about society outside the school and planning what needs to be done.

These different degrees of growth did not become evident to the faculty until it began to list behavior which it considered assumption of responsibility at the various grade levels.

It is helpful to spend a portion of the class time in discussing situations in which evidence of growth may be expected. The third-grade class mentioned above could actually check on their trips to the library to see whether they had increased their skill in getting a book. They might undertake some role-

playing in which they could create test situations for themselves.

Unplanned and unidentified situations also provide evidence of desired growth. We have come to believe that learning can best be exhibited in a new learning situation—that the best test situation is a new problem whose solution provides a pupil with an opportunity to exhibit the skills, knowledge, and attitudes he has gained in solving previous problems.

Are Tests Helpful?

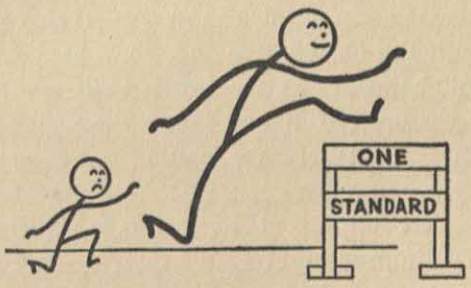
One of the mistakes that have been made in the past is to assume that the type of behavior sought by schools can be measured best by paper-and-pencil test situations. We have falsely believed that such situations are more valid than are real-life experiences. Actually, test construction is a process of devising situations which sample a person's true behavior in more controlled situations. The very act of transferring a situation to a paper-and-pencil test renders it artificial. To be valid, tests must parallel the type of behavior that a person would exhibit in a less restricted situation. The validity of a paper-and-pencil test is determined by running correlations between test responses and the way persons behave in normal situations.

Thus, paper-and-pencil tests do not reveal more significant information about a child than we are able to observe in a classroom or playground situation. Almost everyone would agree that having a boy paint a picture is a more valid test of how well he can paint than to have him describe the technique or to take a true-false quiz on it. Paper-and-pencil tests are merely substitutes for real situations. Their only real function is to provide us with a short cut in determining what we could learn much better about a child through continued experience with him. Our evaluation function is to seek ways we can help pupils record and evaluate behavior in real situations.

So much emphasis has been placed on paper-and-pencil tests, however, that it may be desirable to digress for a moment to examine the uses and misuses to which they may be put.

Tests serve many purposes—some good, some destructive. In some classrooms, they have become the major directing force. They determine the method and content of the course and set the purposes for pupils. Teachers teach in a way that will make it possible for their pupils to do well on city-wide or state-wide tests, even though many state categorically that they could do a better job if they did not have to do so. Pupils consider the passing of the final examination the principal objective of the course, the obstacle they are seeking to hurdle. Learning is unimportant except as it contributes to the ability to pass the examination. In the eyes of both teacher and pupil, the examination rather than pupil needs determines the focus of the course.

One of the most common uses of tests is to separate the successful from the failures. A standard for success is established. The students who meet this standard pass; and the ones



who don't, fail. Although this practice is common, a question might well be raised about the validity of establishing a standard of passing. When individual differences are considered, the type of work that represents successful work for one pupil might be completely unsatisfactory for another pupil, and vice versa.

A third use of standardized tests is to compare the work of pupils within a class with the work of other pupils throughout the nation. This process may work against a valid judgment of pupil work unless care is used in interpreting the results. The

test may set too low a standard. The class may be in a cultural area that is much superior to other areas of the nation. For example, to judge as satisfactory the work of an eighth-grade class which reaches the eighth-grade norm in a Long Island school where the average I.Q. is 117 is misleading to pupils and parents. Or the school may be located in a community where there is not and should not be any attempt to guide pupil growth along the lines measured by the tests.

Evaluating the work of the pupil with standardized tests may prevent the school from contributing to the real needs of the community and the pupils who live there. As long as the means of collecting evidence are prepared and presented by persons outside the teaching situation, they may be invalid; they may not measure the type of pupil growth for which the class is striving; they may lead to the establishment of false goals.

The real value of standardized tests lies in the aid they give in measuring pupil progress from one administration of the test to another. If a standardized test is used that measures the type of growth the class is seeking, the change in scores on different administrations of the test is evidence of real pupil growth. For example, if Ralph Jones, a seventh-grade pupil, scores at sixth-grade level on a reading test taken on January 15, and at ninth-grade level on a re-test a year later, the school has evidence that Ralph is still growing in skills measured by the test and is improving at faster than the normal rate. He has made an average three years' progress in one year. This progress, however, needs to be related to his academic aptitude score if it is to be interpreted intelligently.

Standardized tests are valuable also in selecting curricular materials suited to the level of the class and of individuals within the class. For example, if a teacher gives a reading test and discovers that his high-school freshmen have an average sixth-grade reading level, he should select some curricular materials which have been prepared for pupils with sixth-grade reading ability.

One of the best uses of tests is to provide data for pupil-

teacher planning. The test scores constitute a type of evidence that is useful in analyzing strengths and weaknesses with a pupil. Test scores, along with other data, serve as a basis for establishing goals or formulating a plan of work.

In summary, tests are one method of collecting evidence. They may be devised by individual teachers or they may be selected from available standardized forms. Whether or not they have real value depends upon the extent to which they sample the types of growth sought, their acceptance by the group or individual as a useful tool, and the care with which the evidence collected is interpreted and used.

Now to return to our discussion of collecting evidence of pupil growth. We have a much better chance of success in the evaluation process if we encourage each student to take responsibility for collecting evidence of his own growth. We can assist by the steps already described, and by providing a folder or other depository for the evidence collected.

The points that have been made with regard to the collecting of evidence concerning individual growth apply to evaluating group growth as well. We need to plan with the group the kinds of improvement sought and to devise ways of recording group behavior. Flow charts, summaries of group discussions, and observers' reports are all ways of collecting evidence of group growth.

We can collect evidence of growth, then, as we help pupils decide on the type of growth sought, define the types of behavior which represent desired growth, and establish ways of sampling and recording the behavior exhibited. Paper-and-pencil tests may be one device, but it is just as feasible and as valid to help pupils utilize such techniques as anecdotal records, interviews, diaries, records of activities, pupil and class products, and tape recordings.

How Do We Record Evidence?

We keep detailed records in the evaluative process because we can't depend on our memory. We need some way of remem-

bering where we started, the kinds of behavior that have been exhibited at various times, and the experiences through which we have gone and our reactions to them. If we do not record essential data, we may forget many important facts, recalling only those which are most recent or which we choose to remember. *Records are a means of retaining information beyond the memory span and of basing judgments on the greatest possible number of observations.*

If records are kept to assist the pupil, we profit if we give him a part in planning the type of records to keep, how they will be kept, and how they will be used.

Recording behavior is not entirely the teacher's job. Of course, some teachers have assumed that they should administer and grade tests, and then record and interpret the marks. Such teachers consider records as evidence for or against a student. They fear that if pupils are given access to records, particularly unfavorable ones, the records may mysteriously be altered or even disappear. But if evaluation is regarded as a process of judging past performance and planning future activities on the basis of our judgments, the pupils are in just as good a position to record what has happened as we are. If records are used as the basis for decisions on improving the school experience, rather than as the basis for value judgments about pupils, they may be kept by the pupils, by the teacher, or even by the parents. Our function then is to help pupils decide what is important to record, to devise efficient ways of keeping records, and to join with them in making judgments based on the records.

Bringing pupils into the recording process makes possible the use of a greater number of techniques. One technique is to have pupils keep folders of their work, including specific plans and final products. If a youngster can examine the work he did in September and compare it with the work he did in November, he will be able to determine for himself whether his experiences have resulted in significant progress. He can say, "These experiences have been satisfactory," or "These experi-

ences have been largely futile and pointless." In either case, he can use the evidence in the folder as a basis for planning his next steps.

What Records Does the Pupil Keep?

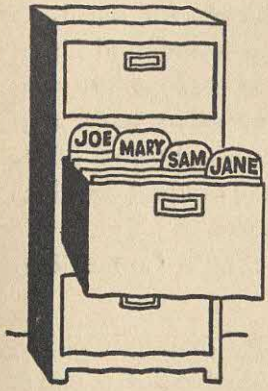
A folder of samples is an easy sort of record for pupils to keep. The only work involved is the actual selecting and filing. It does, however, lead to an added sense of responsibility on the part of each student. The folder is a record of *his* work, and *he* is responsible for choosing the samples wisely and selectively. Naturally, this process also leads to the gradual development of self-imposed standards of performance.

A Problems of American Democracy teacher in Connecticut describes her results as follows:

> I bought a single, letter-size, cardboard file drawer. I placed separators for each class in the file, such as Period 2, 4, 5, and 6. Each student contributed two cents to defray the expense of the Manila folders. In the upper righthand corner of each folder is the student's name and class. Each folder is filed in alphabetical order behind the proper class separator. The students have a choice of keeping an Annotated Bibliography or notes in outline form on their readings.
>
> So far, the new system of record keeping has accomplished the following:
>
> 1. Students progress at their own speed.
> 2. Students are doing their own reading and filing their reports.
> 3. They are filing their own reports and seem to have a greater sense of responsibility and accomplishment.
> 4. For those students who are test shy, it gives them a prop—they know they have that grade to their credit.

The contents of the sample folders may vary from class to class. In an English or social studies class the pupils may maintain a *log* of books they have read, movies they have attended, or radio programs they have listened to. In an art class, actual samples of paintings or sculpture may be supplemented by a

scrapbook of pictures or descriptions of new techniques. A boy in an industrial arts class might record the repairs he has made at home. A girl in home economics could include some before-and-after pictures of her room decoration, or a record of her attempts, successes, and failures in cooking at home. A typing or shorthand student can easily maintain a progress chart. Certainly one of the primary records will be the statement of goals the group or individual formulates. These will give guidance in record-keeping and will serve as criteria in judging the evidence collected.



Records of the way a pupil plans and works are as important as the final products themselves, and they can also be included in the sample file. *Individual and committee work plans are valuable sources of evidence.* If the pupil draws up a written plan of his proposed activities, including his purposes, methods, sources, and evaluation procedures, he can compare his first plan with others that he develops later in the year as evidence of improvement in self-direction.

Work plans of committees throw light on the way a pupil works cooperatively. In our society, the individual must be able to work democratically with others as well as to do independent work. Some students do excellent work by themselves, but are inept when they work with others, because of shyness, selfishness, prejudices, or lack of appreciation of the value of cooperation. Samples of the type of work plans produced in a group or committee constitute one source of evidence of the student's ability to work with others.

But the final plan of a committee may give a false impression. When possible, it is desirable to obtain descriptions of the way the committee or group arrived at the final plan. One type of pupil-kept record that gives such information is the

minutes of the committee or class meeting. Interpretation of these records will be discussed in the final section of this chapter.

One worth-while pupil record is a *diary of the ideas and questions* that develop as a result of his experiences and reading. This sort of record has been used as a valuable learning experience and record of growth from the fifth-grade through graduate school. It provides evidence of increased insight and understanding. One of the advantages of the diary is that it enables the pupil to have a record of his thinking as well as of his activities. If the entries are really free responses which indicate the thinking and feelings at any given moment, they will permit a youngster to trace the growth of his own ideas and beliefs. Used in this manner, a well-kept diary proves effective in helping him develop a sense of direction and a pattern of values.

But a word of caution should be added here. If we make judgments about a diary or put a mark on it, we destroy its value. We create a situation in which the pupil becomes concerned about putting down the ideas that will win our approval rather than tracing his own thought pattern. Our assistance should be in terms of raising questions about how to record in a more easily read form, how to record more accurately, how to resolve conflicting viewpoints, and how to recognize the implications of the beliefs stated.

Records and reports can be combined by having each pupil write letters to his parents, telling what he has been doing and describing his strengths and weaknesses. Such letters develop the pupil's skill in self-analysis. They also serve as a record for persons outside the class who are interested in class progress. They can be used as the basis of conferences between pupil and parent or between parent and teacher, or among all three.

Throughout this discussion, the assumption that a pupil will have access to his records has been implicit. Let's recognize it openly. When we bring pupils into the record-keeping and

evaluation, easy access by a pupil to his records becomes imperative.

What Records Do We Keep?

We need to keep records ourselves to supplement those maintained by the students. When a teacher's record of pupil growth is mentioned, the "grade book" immediately comes to mind, and it is hard not to think of recording scores on quizzes and examinations, or the ratings given to pupil work. But these are not part of the evaluative process. Rather, they are *final ratings of certain portions of the activities a pupil has experienced in a given class.* In evaluation, we shift from recording *a series of final ratings to recording a series of samplings of behavior.*

One sampling of pupil behavior is a diagnostic test which helps the pupil determine the areas in which he is weak. By administering the same test at the end of a period of study, we have a record of the amount of development the pupil has made while working in the specific course.

Recording of diagnostic test scores by parts of the test instead of as a total score gives a better picture of pupil growth. Diagnostic tests recorded in this manner make teaching more effective because they direct our attention to the areas in which the student needs help and give us evidence of the effectiveness of the method used.

Of equal value are records of significant observed behavior. For example, if one of the objectives for which we are striving is to develop critical thinking, we record that a student brings to class an advertisement which he has analyzed to discover propaganda techniques. Another piece of such behavior that we might record would be a pupil's collecting editorials designed to stimulate a reader to accept a viewpoint without making an analysis of necessary data. The collection of such materials would be evidence of the pupil's growing awareness of propaganda techniques and their use. Records of observable behavior have proved particularly helpful in recording emo-

tional development, social development, and improvements in the techniques of social interaction.

Teacher records of observed behavior are of many types. One form is the anecdotal record of an incident which demonstrates growth or lack of it. When we observe a situation in which a pupil either succeeds or fails in carrying out some important purpose, we describe the event on the card and file it until it is time to discuss his progress with the pupil or with his parents. Or we may maintain a brief chronological record of behavior exhibited by a pupil, jotting down any bits of evidence of growth we wish to record, together with the date on which the behavior was observed. For example, the card for Ralph Jones in a social studies class might read as follows:

Ralph Jones

9/10	Argued that all Jewish businesses should be boycotted.
10/1	Refused to work on committee with Japanese.
10/11	Argued that voting privilege should be restricted to persons whose families had lived in U. S. over 100 years.
10/31	Strongly supported right of KKK to organize.
11/5	Volunteered to study anti-lynching bill before Congress.
11/16	Questioned right of citizens to take law into their own hands.

Examples of behavior as widely scattered as these might easily go unnoticed among thirty-five pupils unless objectives are clearly defined and some chronological record is kept. If we expect to rely upon anecdotal records, we must be aware of two shortcomings. Keeping them is a time-consuming process, and we must be aware that our interpretation of what happened may not be an accurate description of what actually

occurred. Our perception is conditioned by our own needs and purposes.

Interviews also provide important information about pupil status and growth. They may be conducted with parents, pupils, or any other persons who know a pupil and his activities. Such interviews may deal with the pupil's successes or failures, his strengths or weaknesses, his selection of a college or a vocation, or his personal, social, or scholastic problems. Each interview gives important insights into pupil motivations and relationships, which are important data to record. A parent's insistence that Ralph become a doctor is as vital to us in helping Ralph as to know that Ralph's greatest abilities lie in color and design. Interviews with parents are also a means of securing a record of out-of-school behavior, where the most significant growth may be occurring.

Transcriptions and tape recordings may be made by either pupil or teacher. Their widest use to date has been in the fields of music and speech. A transcription is made at the beginning of the teaching-learning process, and another at the end. This procedure gives a pupil in a dramatics or speech class, or a group in instrumental or choral music, a definite, objective record of the progress that has been made. It also stimulates pupil participation in evaluation. This technique has been used to discover how successful a science class had been in improving its skills of planning and critical thinking.

What Group Records Do We Keep?

Records of group activities and growth are as important as those of individual progress. The group, if it is to work efficiently, must evaluate its progress.

Class minutes are a valuable source of evidence of group growth. They are helpful in determining whether or not progress is being made in ways of working together. If a class can look at the minutes of a meeting in October and then at the minutes of January, and see that their planning and evaluation

techniques have improved, they have definite proof that they are making progress.

Committee reports also provide significant evidence of group progress. If we compare committee reports made at the beginning of the year with reports made later in the year, we can determine whether or not the members of the group are learning better how to share the information that has been collected. We also gain some insight into whether or not there has been an increase in skill in locating, collecting, and organizing material.

If the class is seeking to improve its reading, records may be kept of the amount and kind of reading done. For example, in one school of 1,000 students, 800 books were read during the fall semester. In the spring semester, after the library had been reorganized and teachers began to have pupils share reading experiences, 12,800 books were read. By looking at the reading record for the two semesters, the students in the school had dramatic evidence of the extent to which they were increasing their reading. Quantitative information of this sort can be supplemented if each student keeps a record of the titles he reads over a period of time. A comparison of these lists will enable the students to determine whether they are reading more mature books, or whether they are continuing to read at the same level. If a group continues to read the same type of book throughout a whole year, it is fairly safe to assume that the reading level and reading interests of the group have not improved.

A class diary enables the group to compare the types of activities undertaken by the class at different times. It also gives members of the class an opportunity to study the pattern of work they have followed and to compare the effectiveness of one pattern with another.

Having one student serve as class recorder is helpful. But keeping comprehensive records of class activities is a demanding, time-consuming job, and one pupil should not be made re-

sponsible for it over too long a period. Rather, it should be passed from one student to another so that all will have a chance to share in this responsibility and learn the techniques of keeping records for a group. Each member of the group should be willing to serve as group recorder, because of the contribution the records make to the group and because of the skill he will develop during the experience.

To simplify the task, the class recorder may set up a file in which he will keep a record of the aims the class has set for itself, minutes of class meetings, samples of committee reports, conclusions the class draws as a result of its study, and any other types of information that the group thinks are valuable.

To insure the success of this scheme, each member of the group should be willing to allow the group recorder to look at his individual records. Through analysis of individual records, the recorder will be able to compile a meaningful record of the work of the whole group. If he does not have access to individual records, his group record will necessarily be less accurate. Or we might examine the records of individuals and prepare a summary for the group.

A file of class plans enables students to look back at their previous undertakings and to compare the thoroughness with which they have planned at different times. Since it also indicates the scope of the work previously done and reveals to the class the areas still untouched by its work together, the class file also serves as a guide in deciding on what steps should be taken next.

The tape recorder can be used to great advantage in sampling various class sessions. It permits students to review the ways they made plans, to evaluate types of participation, and to determine the level of enthusiasm with a greater degree of accuracy than do any of the other ways of recording behavior that have been mentioned.

In classes without access to a tape recorder, a flow chart will indicate the number and the general location of participants. It enables a class to see which pupils have withdrawn from

various discussions, and if this is a consistent pattern, it provides evidence upon which plans can be made for stimulating them into greater participation.

The group may also appoint one of its members to serve as an observer who will help obtain an accurate record of what is happening. An understanding of the purposes of the class and the use of the following questions as a check list will help the observer make his report comprehensive and meaningful.

General

Was the class meeting slow in getting started?
Was the atmosphere easy, relaxed, and comfortable?
Was the tempo slow, hurried, or satisfactory?
Was the interest level high?
Was the purpose clear to all?
Were members cooperative?
Was information shared?
Were members sensitive to one another?
Were tensions brought out into the open?
Was there evidence of feelings of superiority?
Were ideas forced on the group?
Was the group able to accept differences?
Was the group able to discipline itself?
Was any decision reached?
Was there resistence to group decisions?

Participation

Was participation spread throughout the group?
Was discussion centered for a long period in one portion of the group?
Was the discussion initiated by group members?
Were there difficulties in communication?
Was there a feeling of give and take?
Were members eager to speak?
Were certain members taking more than their share of the time?
Were members showing aggression?
Was the discussion limited to the topic?

Were members assuming responsibility for the success of the meeting?
Were members attempting to draw each other out?

Discussion Leadership

Did the leader help the group to establish direction?
Did the leader give encouragement?
Did the leader attempt to bring in non-participating members?
Did the leader volunteer more help than was needed?
Did the leader recognize those who wished to speak?
Did the leader dominate the meeting?
Did the leader manifest feelings of superiority?
Did the leader keep things going?
Did the leader bring the specialized skills of members to bear on the problem?
Did the leader summarize as necessary?
Did the leader try to give answers for the group?
Did the leader get a consensus?

How Are Judgments Made?

It is not our function to make value judgments about pupil growth. Rather, it is to assist the individual or the class in analyzing the situation and in formulating plans for improvement. We do not ask leading questions designed to convince others of our point of view. We give our opinion when it is called for and we offer suggestions when they are asked for. We are there to help the pupils grow in self-direction and maturity, rather than to increase their dependence on our judgment.

In applying the evaluative process to individual growth, all the persons concerned have a part in making the decisions. Pupil-teacher conferences provide opportunity for both to examine the record, to make judgments in terms of the criteria, and to formulate new plans. Teacher-parent conferences or pupil-parent conferences or reports to parents which provide space for parent reaction are other opportunities for joint judgments about the work.

In one parent-teacher conference the teacher of a second-grade youngster said, "Your son likes to paint. His pictures all feature Indians and cowboys—usually fighting. He has read five books. He has learned to add single digits. He gets along well with the members of the class, even though he fights occasionally to retain the leadership among the boys." No attempt was made to pass judgment. Instead, the teacher asked if the boy's behavior at home followed the same pattern. After the parent had supplied additional information, the teacher and the parent agreed on steps that each should take.

If parents or pupils are unrealistic about the amount of progress that can be expected, we may need to acquaint them with the typical achievement of youngsters of similar ability and maturity. Our purpose is not to say that any pupil must measure up to such a standard. It is merely to provide additional data which can be used to make a more intelligent decision. In most cases, the parent will ask for this information. Our task in many conferences is to keep parents from concentrating so much on the norms that other factors are not given enough consideration.

Even though it is possible in most situations to arrive at agreement concerning pupil progress, it may be necessary at times for us to register a judgment that differs from that of the student or of his parents. Such judgments should become a part of the pupil's record so that he may consider them in future planning. If we want to continue to work with the pupil, we will agree to test both his judgment and our own in future situations. If we both agree to try to gain more evidence and to review our judgments at a future date, the disagreement does not become a barrier to cooperation. Rather it becomes a common problem we are exploring together.

It helps if we keep in mind that any judgment is an individual matter. The amount of growth that is good for one pupil is not satisfactory for another. Any judgment must be in terms of the potential and the limitation of the situation and the persons.

When the judgment is one that comes at the end of the time we are to work with the pupil, a record must be made of it and our judgment has to be the final one. We have the legal authority and responsibility to make it. The chances are great that there will be no disagreement if we have planned and evaluated frequently with parents and pupils, but if there is we should recognize that we have stopped the evaluative process and are making an arbitrary decision of a classifying nature. We are marking—perhaps failing or promoting. Where possible, we should make it in a way that will enable the parent and pupil to reestablish the evaluative process with the next teacher.

In making judgments about group process we follow the same procedure we do with the individual. We take the steps that will involve all who are concerned in the judgment-making.

Group judgments are made concerning goals, achievement, and process.

When a project has been completed, a judgment concerning these aspects of the work is in order. Here are some helpful questions: "Have we accomplished as much as we had hoped? Have we been as thorough as we needed to be? Have we measured up to the standards we set for ourselves? How should we change our goals and our method?"

In evaluating class procedures, it is desirable to center attention on the "how" rather than on the "who." As a class looks back at an experience and discusses the mistakes that were made and ways to improve the process in the future, no specific individual action by the teacher or by a pupil should be isolated from the total procedure. If the pronoun "we" is emphasized, this result will be obtained. Helpful questions are: "What mistakes did we make?" "How can we improve next time?" "Should we change our goals?" These questions eliminate pointing fingers at individuals and leave people free to suggest improvements without fear of hurting anyone's feelings. Further, they leave the individual free to analyze his own partici-

pation without a sense of conceit or guilt. The emphasis in group evaluation is on group progress rather than on individual growth.

We can rely on pupils to make intelligent judgments about their work if we provide them with sufficient guidance.

> In a Schenectady high-school English class, the teacher has the pupils judge their own themes. Good writing is discussed and the class form a set of criteria by which to judge their performance. On the day the themes are brought to class, small groups of six meet and share their work. Each group reads and picks from the six the theme it considers best, presents it to the class, and gives the reasons for the selection.

Not only are the students getting practice in applying standards, but through the process of exchanging ideas about writing the standards themselves are being refined.

Judgments are made concerning both individual and group progress as a part of the process of planning intelligently with a class. It is necessary to help the individual student determine the quality of his growth and plan how he can increase it. The group needs the same type of help.

How Do We Report Pupil Growth?

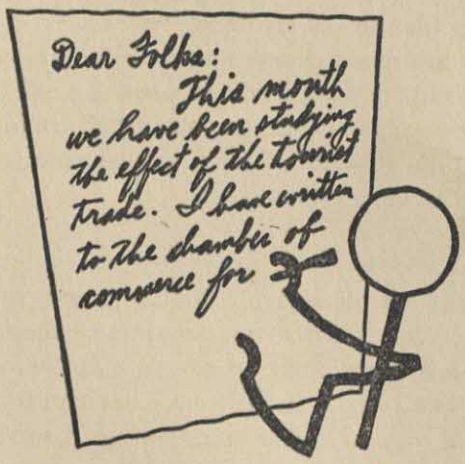
We are seeking a method of bringing parents into the evaluative process. We hope that our reports to parents will enable them to know of their child's progress, give them guidance in assisting the child's education, stimulate them to offer advice, and help them counsel the child concerning his future plans.

Let's look at typical reporting procedures to see if they serve these functions.

Reports to parents are, for the most part, in the form of report cards listing courses in which the pupil was enrolled, his average mark in each course for the period, days absent and times tardy, plus an estimate of his citizenship. Although the exact procedure varies from school system to school system, administrators, teachers, parents, and pupils have come to expect descriptions of pupil progress to be expressed in terms

of some symbol—either percentages or letter marks. The extent to which these symbols have had the same meaning for teachers, pupils, parents, and administrators depends upon the extent to which persons involved in each situation have discussed the symbols and their meanings.

In recent years, there has been a definite trend away from the use of percentage marks in reporting pupil progress. The impossibility of making distinctions so fine that a teacher can classify students in 101 different categories has been proved by research and has become widely recognized. In fact, only fifteen per cent of the senior high-school report forms throughout the country use percentage marks as the sole form of report to parents.



Letter marks such as A, B, C, D, and F are little better in communicating with parents concerning pupil growth, even though most schools use them. *Letter marks tell parents only that their children conformed or did not conform to a set of unknown standards held by a variety of teachers.* Even when the school states that a certain mark represents a certain average of work, parents do not receive descriptions of the situations the teacher averaged to obtain the mark. Nor are parents

told that the same reaction by a student will receive widely different ratings from different teachers.

Marks indicate class standing. The parents know that a pupil receiving an "A" is at the top of the group being rated. But that's all. It obviously tells them nothing about what progress the child is making, nor does it suggest ways in which they can help in his education. What does the fact that their child is first in his class each month really mean? Only that he is at the head of a group which may be inefficient, lazy, and unintelligent, or brilliant, hardworking, and effective. Or suppose the pupil's standing is always the lowest in the group. Does it necessarily mean that the child is a poor student or lazy? Not at all. He may be a good student who tries hard, but who has been placed in the best group in the school. He may be getting more valuable educational experiences in this group than he could possibly get in any other. Yet his report of standing leaves the impression that he is doing poor work and is unsuccessful in school. Further, marks based on class standing promote competitiveness instead of cooperative learning. The comparative-standing method of marking forces each child to use every stratagem at his command in his efforts to excel his friends. He may even resort to cheating when approved procedures fail. An improvement in standing may mean only the development of more effective techniques of cheating.

In the past, reports have often consisted of comparative ratings for work already finished. They have told parents nothing about what they can do to help their child succeed in what he is currently doing. Parents have not been recognized as partners in education. Rather, they have been regarded as stockholders to whom dividend declarations must be sent at regular intervals.

Although many observers have recognized these shortcomings in our reporting system for some time, few steps have been taken to improve the procedure. Most school systems have felt that parents were so accustomed to the present marks that any change in the system would be resented.

However, a recent study offers opposing evidence. In a survey of a carefully selected sampling of 387 parents of secondary school pupils conducted by a committee of the Portland Council of the Oregon Parents and Teachers, it was found that the majority of parents would like the report card to include the following information about their children: (1) Social habits (adjustment to other children, pride in class, accomplishments, and school activities, desire to improve self) (60 per cent). (2) Intellectual habits (pride in work, accuracy, completed work, ready to work at right time) (62 per cent). (3) Special interests, abilities, and extra-curricular activities (69 per cent). (4) Child's rating on standard achievement tests in various fields (92 per cent). (5) General achievement to be expected of a child of his age level (79 per cent). (6) General achievement to be expected of a child of his grade level (88 per cent). Parents desired that the report contain space for teacher comments (84 per cent), parent comments (61 per cent), and pupil comments (53 per cent). These figures indicate that parents are willing and ready to take a larger part in the evaluative process.

Parents who take an active part in the evaluative process want to know more about the strengths and weaknesses of their children, the skills their children are developing, the progress they are making, and the ways in which they, as parents, can help. They want *more* information, not less. Information of this sort is of real interest to parents, and they have a legitimate right to it. The fact that they do want to be informed presents teachers with a real challenge, and many ingenious methods for better reporting are being developed.

For instance, we can improve our reports to parents by substituting descriptive paragraphs for ambiguous symbols. The following report on the work of a third-grade boy during his third month in a new school is an example:

> Sam has a fine quality of honesty in dealing with himself and with others. It helps him meet problems squarely. He is coming to find his place in the group. He is showing some willingness

to allow others their turns and to act, himself, as follower at times as well as to take leadership.

He seems to be happy and he is much more willing to accept suggestions.

Sam can work quite independently. He can stick to a piece of work until it is finished. He plans and he can work by these plans.

He is not particularly thrifty nor does he show much concern about caring for materials. However, he will join a group which is caring for materials and do a moderate share of it willingly, if asked.

He has high standards for most types of work. He holds himself to these standards.

He is doing quite mature work in all subject matter. He reads well and avidly. He has wide interests.

There are days when arithmetic seems uninteresting to him until we get well into it; then he seems to forget he preferred something else and loses himself in trying out his skill.

He has a fine speaking vocabulary, expresses himself well, and enjoys sharing his experiences.

He has a fine sense of drama and contributes richly to group situations of this nature.

He enjoys music as a usual thing. He is interested in sound production as well as in the music itself.

Sam has a very fine curiosity. He is alert and asks many highly intelligent questions. He is learning to use the library.

It is easy to see how much more such a report tells the parent than the typical report card.

This report was one of two sent to the parents during the year. The reports were supplemented by individual interviews, as desired, and by meetings of all the parents with the teacher to discuss the class activities. Thus, reports to parents included a description of the program as well as of pupil growth.

The second report, sent home in the eighth month, stated:

> Sam has continued his growth in reading ability. He knows all the addition facts, most of the subtraction facts, and several multiplication facts. He has a beginning understanding of multiplication. He is showing more interest and more carefulness in penmanship. Spelling seems to him quite unimportant and hardly worth the bother, since one can express ideas through other means. However, he works on spelling with his small group of closest friends when they try themselves out on it. He has written some good letters, one brief story, and directions for puppet plays.
>
> He has grown in consideration of others. He is more willing to allow others their turns with tools, privileges, and play things.
>
> Sam is deeply concerned about the war situation to the point of worrying about whether it is going "to get me when I get big." This has shown up in puppet plays, dramatizations, and paintings.

Such reports take more time to prepare than do report cards, but the time ordinarily spent in marking papers is lessened. Pupils check their own papers to find where they need to improve rather than to assign themselves marks. Also, if the number of reports per year is reduced, the preparation of the reports can be staggered so that only two or three need be written each week.

In a few high schools, pupils write the major portion of the report. In the Alabama school described previously, the student writes a letter to his parents each month telling the things he has been doing in school, the progress he feels he has made, and his plans for his next month's work. Each letter is used as the basis of a conference between pupil and teacher. If necessary, the teacher adds additional comments to the letter. In this procedure, the student and the teacher evaluate the work together, and each has an opportunity to call to the attention of the other any factors in the situation they feel are being overlooked.

Parents are also given an opportunity to express their evaluation of the child's performance. A space is provided on the report forms in which they can list changes they would like to see made, reports on the child's home behavior, and suggestions about ways in which they feel they can be of help.

A few schools, mostly elementary, have dispensed completely with written reports to parents by substituting scheduled interviews at certain designated intervals. In the interview, the parents are told of their child's academic progress, citizenship, aptitudes, and other activities. In turn, the parents raise questions about the teacher's analysis and procedures and discuss ways in which the teacher and parents can work together to do a better job of educating the child. Such interviews provide real opportunity for interaction and joint planning. *Reporting and judgment-making are conducted together under such a plan.*

If we teach in a school where reports to parents must be made in terms of marks or percentages, we are handicapped in our use of the evaluative process. We will need to confer with students on how our joint judgments about their progress can be translated accurately into a letter-mark report to their parents. Teachers who have tried this procedure report that in ten to fifteen per cent of the cases, they were not able to reach agreement. The bitterness and disappointments engendered by these disagreements sometimes create a cynicism toward the evaluation procedures in the total class. But it is the best process yet developed in situations where reports must be made in letter marks.

Under such conditions, we will want to suggest to fellow faculty members and parents the desirability of revising our reporting procedures, and call to their attention the inefficiency and harmfulness of the present system. Many teachers and parents are fully aware of the frustration caused by ratings, but they have accepted the system as a necessary evil. Leadership is needed in helping all concerned to face the fact that marks as a method of reporting are a device that can be altered.

Creative effort in formulating a better system of reporting will make possible wider application of the evaluation process and increase the efficiency of learning situations (see Appendix B).

Reports can be an integral part of the evaluative process if our reporting procedures are designed to secure and utilize the judgments of those to whom we report. If we make judgments before reporting, we do not receive the full benefit of the reactions of all concerned in formulating plans for the steps to be taken next. If we simply report progress, and invite those who receive the report to share in the judgment, however, we increase the worth of the evaluation.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Seek agreement with pupils on desired goals.
2. Help the pupil learn and record the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and interests he possesses as he begins work with us.
3. Take time to discuss with pupils the type of behavior which represents attainment of desired goals.
4. Secure evidence of pupil growth, where possible, in actual problem-solving situations.
5. Recognize that paper-and-pencil tests are only one way of collecting evidence, useful when they measure the kind of growth sought.
6. Bring pupils and parents into the process of collecting, recording, and interpreting evidence.
7. Collect and record samples of both individual and group change.
8. Use many ways of sampling pupil growth—plans, products, diaries, and other records kept.
9. Provide space for pupils to file evidence of growth.
10. Make a pupil's records available to him.
11. Keep records of group progress and achievement—plans, minutes, and products.
12. Bring pupils, parents, and other persons concerned into the judgment-making.
13. Utilize judgments concerning change as a step in plan-

ning improvement of class work. Enter into a cooperative agreement to test judgments against future developments when judgments of parent or pupil disagree with our own.

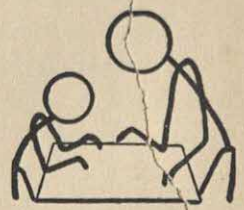
14. Make judgments in such a way as to make possible continued evaluation.

15. Strive constantly to increase the amount of information shared with parents.

16. Invite parents to plan the reporting procedure with us.

17. Provide an opportunity for parents to join in making judgments about the changes reported. Conferences between teacher and parent are most effective.

Teaching Is Skill in Individualizing Instruction



Chapter II

What Can We Do About Individual Differences?

Purposeful activity on the part of students cannot be obtained unless we make provision to accommodate their individual differences. If we assign the same reading to all the members of our ninth-grade class, we cannot expect the child who is able to read only at the fifth-grade level to find purpose in the work. The ninth-grade book will be almost as meaningless to him as a foreign language text would be. And a uniform class reading assignment is as purposeless for the advanced student. To give a ninth-grade book with ninth-grade words and concepts to a student with college-level reading ability is to run the risk of convincing him that life is easy and the task not worth doing. The ninth-grade book is like a foreign language to the poor reader but it is on a par with Mother Goose for the superior reader.

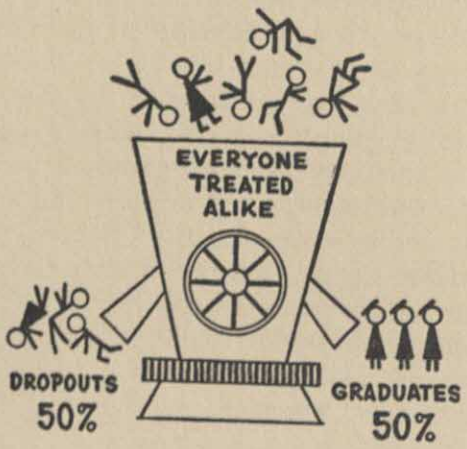
Failure to take into consideration other important types of individual differences may be equally disastrous. A fifteen-year-old boy who has been building radio sets as a hobby since he was eight will find very little challenge in reading a chapter on the elementary principles of radio, even though the material is included in the physics textbook. A high-school sophomore whose musical background and experience have included participation in folk dancing or "all-night sings" of Sacred Harp music may find a study of Carmen meaningless. In one case the class work is a duplication of previous experience, and in

the other the new topic is so far removed from knowledge already possessed that the child cannot make the necessary transition.

To insure purposeful pupil activity, it is necessary to use teaching procedures that make possible individualized instruction.

What Types of Individual Differences Are Important?

When asked how his school cared for individual differences, one principal said, "There is no problem of individual differences in my school—everyone follows the same curriculum.



Everyone is treated alike and is subject to the same discipline. If a child does not conform, he is expelled." What that principal did not reveal was that each year his school contributed approximately twenty delinquents to the reform schools of his state. This unmentioned fact becomes all the more striking when we learn that the school is located in one of the best residential districts of the city.

Another example of the way some teachers feel about individual differences is indicated by the remark of a college professor of history. When asked whether he cared for individual

differences in his class, he said, "Sure, I care for individual differences. On Friday of each week I give the students five minutes to ask questions concerning information they did not understand." Apparently the only difference he considered important was difference in lack of clarity on points of his lecture.

A high-school English teacher revealed how she was caring for individual differences by the following remark: "Wouldn't it be wonderful if all our classes were as good as the upper twenty per cent of the students we teach?" What she really meant was that she was providing for the type of student found in the upper twenty per cent. Until teachers become conscious of the important differences in their students and feel a responsibility for meeting individual needs, little significant change in teaching procedure will take place.

Individual differences are not equally important; nor do they all demand the attention of the school. For example, we need not be concerned about whether Jack Black has blue eyes or whether Mike Loomis wears a size six shoe. But if Susan Jones is near-sighted and can't see the blackboard from the back of the room, or if Earl Neal comes from a family of seven that lives in one room without adequate light or a place to study, our acquaintance with these facts should lead to adjustments in our teaching. Those individual differences that increase or decrease purposeful activity are matters of consequence to the teacher.

One of the most important differences that will affect our teaching is home background. If one child comes from a broken home and suffers from insecurity, the most important contribution we may be able to make to his life is to give him affection and help him acquire a feeling of belonging. This feeling of belonging will be necessary before efficient school work of the ordinary type can be expected. Another child, from a home where his every wish has been catered to and his slightest illness has been a cause of undue disturbance, may need just the opposite treatment. Pupils may be compared to a doctor's pa-

tients. The same medicine and the same bedside manner are not suitable to all. The treatment is varied in terms of the individual and his needs.

Another significant background difference is cultural level of the parents. One child may come from a home where the parents speak perfect English and talk knowingly about new books and plays. The parents of another child in the same class may mix tenses, split infinitives, and read only wild west and movie magazines. Is the English teacher to treat these pupils alike and expect the same quality of work from both? The effect of differences in home culture is illustrated by the following incident.

> A boy in an education methods class went through the entire semester's work and said only a few words. When asked why he did not make more contributions to class discussion, he said, "My father and mother are Italian-born, naturalized citizens. In my home the only language I ever hear is Italian. When I start to speak in a large group the words do not come as fast as I think."

Economic conditions or social position of families affect the school work of children. A child from a family on relief or from a poverty-stricken cropper family may face school with the handicaps of poor nutrition, patched, "hand-me-down" clothes that give him a feeling of inferiority and insecurity, and a crowded, poorly lighted, noisy study environment at home. Or insufficient income may force children to come to school without needed books, pencils, paper, or even glasses and dental care. On the opposite side of the picture, an over-supply of money given to students by financially successful, well-meaning parents may lead to such a round of out-of-school pleasures that time for study will be inadequate. Or a child from a family of the upper social circles may feel so superior that he believes he should be favored by the teacher. One fifth-grade girl from a wealthy family demonstrates the point. She was generous on

all except one point. She felt that she should be chairman of every committee on which she served.

Another important individual difference is the personal health of the students. A child suffering from malnutrition will most likely not appreciate *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* give full attention to a physics problem, or play a hard game of basketball. In some classes in certain rural and urban districts one-fourth to one-half of the students lack energy for good school work because of malnutrition and other energy-stealers such as hookworm, anemia, and malaria. Other students, stimulated by an overactive thyroid, may find it difficult to remain as quiet as they are expected to in the classroom.

Closely allied to these factors are the handicaps suffered by school children as a result of physical defects. Estimates of the prevalence of serious deafness among school children are usually above six per cent. Defective vision seriously curtails achievement in schools which depend too much on learning by reading. Speech disorders such as stuttering, cleft palate, and thick tongue produce reticence or need for compensation in a certain percentage of the school population. And defects of bone structure affect participation in physical education classes.

In an ideal situation, all schools would provide health examinations for every child, and the pertinent reports would accompany the other records. Unfortunately, however, this practice is far from universal. Many school systems fail to give even vision and hearing tests. So when we are working in school systems where health records are unavailable, we must be on the alert for certain danger signals. Malnutrition shows itself in listlessness, pallor, and thinness. Signs of poor vision are squinting, frequent headaches, holding the reading material too close or too far away, skipping words when reading aloud, confusing common two- or three-letter words such as "in" and "an," and complaining of difficulty in seeing the blackboard. Poor hearing is suggested by speaking too loudly, omitting syllables in new words, lip reading, constant asking for

repetition of statements or questions, seeming inattentiveness, inability to follow group discussion, and unusual spelling errors. None of these signals mentioned is a sure indication of an eye or ear defect, but any one may serve as a basis for recommendations that certain pupils have their ears or eyes examined.

It would seem that any teacher would notice such obvious evidences of maladjustments, but not all teachers do.

> A girl from the county schools was enrolled in an Alabama demonstration school. At the end of two weeks, all her teachers were concerned about her failing work. Most of the teachers felt the transition from a rural to an urban school had proved too great an effort. One day the mathematics teacher observed the girl, who was tall and slender, bent over her desk with her eyes only six inches above the paper on which she was working. Inquiry revealed that no record of poor eyesight had accompanied the girl's transcript of credit. When the mathematics teacher asked the student if she had ever had an eye examination, the girl, quite surprised at the interest shown in her, answered in the negative. Acting upon the advice of the teacher, the girl had her eyes examined that afternoon. Next day she came to school with glasses, and from that time did successful school work. As if to make the lesson clearer, the very first day she wore glasses the child raised her hand near the end of the English period and asked permission to read an original poem she had written.

And this was the girl the teachers had expected to fail!

Emotional handicaps may also jeopardize a child's educational achievements. A timid child may be so afraid of us or of participation in a large group that he refrains from contributing to class activities even though he possesses the necessary skill or information. A nervous child may find a long period of unbroken desk work unbearable. Thoughtless comments by the teacher or classmates may blight an entire day for a sensitive individual. Emotional instability resulting from a broken home or a recent tragedy will decrease intellectual efficiency, sometimes to the point of failure.

Emotional disturbances may be manifest in other ways.

> In a southern California junior high school, a girl was wearing a skirt that was attracting a great deal of attention among the boys. It fit so tightly that the boys made remarks about it and the reaction of the boys to this girl caused a distraction in a number of the classes. Finally, the dean of women called the girl into the office and told her not to wear the skirt to school any more. The girl became very angry. Ordinarily she was a very self-contained girl who never caused any trouble in the school. She told the Dean what she thought of her in no uncertain terms and ran out of the school crying, went home and did not return to the school until the welfare officer investigated.
>
> He found that the week before, the father of the girl had run away with another woman. The mother, deserted, was extremely upset and nagged the girl continuously. The girl felt a great feeling of rejection, both on the part of her mother and especially on the part of the father, whom she had loved very much. It was discovered that the skirt which the girl was wearing in spite of the remarks of the boys had been given to her by her father. Her wearing the skirt was an attempt to tie in with the father and assure herself that she had some relationship with the father whom she loved.
>
> . . .
>
> An eight-year-old who had been a well-behaved, well-controlled youngster during most of the school year was unable to remain seated on a May morning. He would get up and go out of the room from time to time. When he remained in his seat he felt nauseated and did not take part in the activities of the class. When the teacher investigated the cause of his behavior, she found that his mother was being operated on that morning. His behavior was caused by his concern over the outcome of the operation.

When we do not give students a chance to explain behavior, when we do not recognize that behavior is caused, when we do not accept youngsters as living up to the best that they know, we take the kind of action that alienates youngsters and de-

creases our chance of ever being able to know them or to help them grow.

Another area in which important differences occur is native ability. Some children have talent in music or art; others do not. Some children can run fast; others are poorly coordinated.

Differences in intellectual prowess represent the type of variation to which the school has devoted most attention. Although psychologists are no longer positive that individual intellectual ability does not change, and at least one study has shown that "intelligence tests" discriminate against children of lower socio-economic groups, still there is general agreement that potentialities differ from individual to individual. We are all familiar with "intelligence tests" that are scored in terms of intelligence quotients. We know that in an average class these I.Q.'s may range from 75 to 130. Unfortunately, some teachers have placed too much faith in "intelligence tests," even to the extent of allowing the scores to influence their marking. At the present time, those most familiar with such tests feel that their most important function is to aid the teacher to plan more intelligently the work expected of each pupil.

Care must be exercised in handling information concerning intellectual differences. Intelligence is an individual difference about which people are most sensitive. We may tell a child that he cannot run as fast or write as well as other children in the class and he will not become angry. But if we tell him that his intelligence is low, he may become discouraged and offended.

Differences in background information are also important. Some children, through travel, conversation with parents, hobbies, or out-of-school work, have built up vast stores of information. To expect them to go through elementary steps provided for children totally without background is to waste valuable time and to court discipline problems produced by sheer boredom. Other children, because of interrupted school attendance, find themselves without basic information. Their shortcoming cannot be ignored either.

The variety of past experiences produces diverse interests and ambitions in a group. A seventh-grade class was asked to tell what vocations they wished to follow. The list included aviator, fire chief, bareback rider, baseball player, minister, biochemist, nurse, beauty operator, and novelist. Imagine the difference in material that would appeal to the individual members of that class. And this class is not extraordinary!

Still another type of difference that is important in all fields is the variation in study procedures. Some children learn good study skills at home while others must be taught to use each tool and technique. One of the most essential study skills is reading. In an average class the reading ability extends for four grade levels on each side of the grade. For example, a ninth-grade class will include fifth-grade and college-freshman reading ability.

Children vary also in their desire for status leadership, even children within the same family. Two boys, a second-grade pupil and a fourth-grade pupil, illustrate the point:

> The seven-year-old boy came home from school saying he had been chosen to act the part of a "tree" in a class play. The following conversation ensued.
>
> "I get to be a tree and hold some leaves!"
> "Does the tree have the most to do?"
> "No."
> "Do you like being a tree?"
> "Yes."
> "What part has the most to do and say?"
> "The cricket."
> "Why don't you try to be the cricket?"
> "I'd rather be a tree."
> "I wouldn't. I'd want to be the cricket."

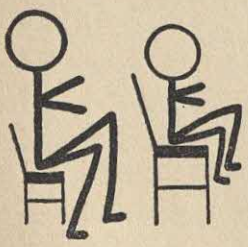
The task of teaching followership and leadership and guiding these two youngsters in group participation presents two separate problems to the teacher.

From the foregoing description of the individual differences important in the classroom, it is evident that the same method

of teaching will not reach all the children in any one class. Each child is an individual personality, and ideally each should receive individual treatment. However, since group teaching is an economic necessity and an educational asset, we are faced with the need for developing procedure that will allow us to care for important individual differences within a group. Effective teaching calls for developing a satisfactory method of caring for individual differences by helping the student to become aware of himself, his abilities, his strengths, his weaknesses, his needs, and his goals, and by working out a way of carrying on individual projects in a group situation.

How Can We Care for Individual Differences?

No one plan will care for all individual needs, but we can increase our effectiveness in this phase of our teaching by recognizing that no two pupils are alike or have the same curriculum, that any attempt to have all students make the same growth in our class is doomed to failure, and that subject matter is primarily a tool to help pupils grow. If we understand that different types of growth will result for different youngsters from the same lesson, we cease to regard our subject-matter field as something to be mastered by all. Rather, we consider it an area in which we are competent to help pupils have experiences that will promote their growth in the ways that are important to them. This concept is basic to meeting individual needs.



Our belief in the importance of meeting individual needs is manifest in many small ways. We seat pupils according to the size of seats or according to their preferences, not in alphabetical order. Left-handed youngsters are provided with a work place in which they can write in a normal position. Near-sighted pupils are invited to sit near the center of activities, and far-sighted ones farther away. Hard-of-hearing pupils are allowed to choose

the spot in which they can hear best. The way we provide for physical differences and organize the furniture in the room to promote work by small groups and individuals is an indication of whether or not we really are concerned about individuals.

The use we make of individual conferences also indicates the extent to which we are attempting to care for individual differences. Do we hold conferences to guide special study, to outline work missed, to explain basic principles which the pupil does not understand, and to assist with reading difficulties? Do we use individual conferences to teach study skills, to help pupils discover the cause of difficulties, to guide the more advanced students and stimulate them to do more challenging work, and to help with personal problems?

Teachers who do not do these things usually protest that they cannot find the time with the load they have. But if we are really concerned, we can find opportunities to talk with individuals during study periods, free reading periods, a few minutes after school, during our planning period, or while the class is working in small groups or doing research in the library. During the preparation of reports, or while students are writing the results of their study, we can sit down with various individuals and talk with them about what they are doing and how they can do it more effectively. If we have established rapport, any spare moment is an occasion when we can talk with pupils about their purposes, plans, and progress.

Our planning sessions can be opportunities for meeting individual differences if we make it possible for each pupil to make his wishes and preferences known. When the class suggests the things it believes it should do next, we have an opportunity to raise questions, both with the total group and with individuals, which cause individuals to explore the value of their present purposes and the efficiency of their work plans.

Accepting different types of growth and different means of expression is also a way of encouraging individual growth. By arbitrarily restricting the type of performance that will be con-

sidered successful in our classes, we limit the extent to which we can individualize instruction. But by offering youngsters the opportunity to express their ideas in various ways we are encouraging individual growth and the development of special talents. For example, after a trip to a canning factory, one youngster may write about it in prose; another may write a poem; a third may paint a picture; a fourth may sing a song that expresses the way he feels about the experience; a fifth may compose a dance; a sixth may write a play; a seventh may make a model of the canning plant. All are legitimate expressions of an individual's reaction to an experience. All provide an interpretation of that experience which gives us cues concerning the type of help we can give the individual.

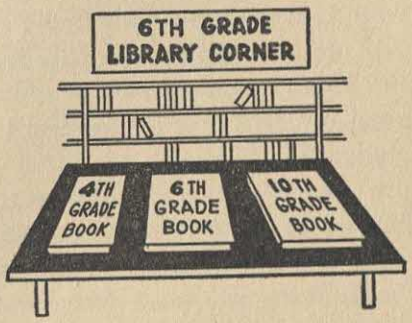
Our general objectives for the class may be supplemented by individual objectives established for each pupil. For example, in teaching American history, we may seek to have the entire class gain an understanding of present social problems, but we may also attempt to improve the reading of Mary Adams, who reads at the ninth-grade level. If we have sufficient information about each pupil, we are able to guide each child in some type of self-improvement in addition to the regular class work.

We meet individual differences by varying the amount of work undertaken. We could never hope to have pupils accept willingly greater amounts of homework simply by assigning it to them, but if we create within our class the type of situation in which the students may select different projects on which to work, organize groups around different tasks and in terms of special abilities, and plan together what is to be done and how it will be done, different programs of work emerge. Individual differences cannot be met successfully unless we use group work.

Group work accommodates another type of individual difference. It gives pupil leadership and initiative a greater opportunity to function.

To conduct a class in a way that cares for individual differ-

ences requires a variety of materials. For instance, one text is not enough. Since the range of reading abilities within an average class is great, it is obvious that one text, suited to only one grade, is too difficult for some pupils and too easy for others. Textbooks for several different grade levels, and supplementary reading materials that include related fiction, autobiographies, references, pamphlet and magazine articles, visual and



auditory aids, and illustrative materials are all necessary. The richness of our collection of materials is one of the best measures of the extent to which we try to care for individual differences.

We need to organize work areas for various types of activities within the room. If we want to provide the kind of learning situation in which a wide range of abilities and potentialities can be served, we need to provide for reading, for art, for crafts, and for dramatics within the framework of the subject-matter area which we are teaching.

A wholesome emotional climate, which has been mentioned before, is another phase of meeting individual differences. Although some children are able to succeed in an emotionally tense classroom, others require more careful treatment. If tension is decreased in the classroom, nervous or emotionally unstable children will find themselves able to work more efficiently. The old rule, "Treat all children alike," is a dangerous one. Creating different emotional relationships between pupil

and teacher is just as much a part of caring for individual differences as providing different materials. The process of helping pupils to become concerned about each other and to begin to plan together how each can assist the other, described fully in a previous chapter, is a part of individualizing instruction.

If we want to work individually with students, we have them help us by keeping many of the records themselves. We will not be able to record all the types of learning that take place. We will not be able to build up an adequate fund of evidence concerning pupil growth by ourselves. The only person who is in a position to make a fairly complete record of his work is the individual student himself.

If we must give marks, we try not to stress the comparisons they imply. When we begin to compare one student with another, the discrepancies in abilities and purposes become so apparent that the students with least purpose and intelligence fall into the background and become discouraged. It is far more effective to talk with students about their progress on an individual basis than on the basis of class standings.

It is advisable also to use more than one index in determining any mark. Some students speak well, others are more fluent with the written word, and still others express themselves best through pictures. To consider only one type of expression handicaps certain students. A particularly vicious practice is the custom of basing marks on final examinations. In addition to being a direct invitation to cheating, the mark based on a final written examination imposes an unfair handicap on the emotional child or the child who speaks better than he writes. Any marks assigned should be based on many records of behavior which sample a variety of activities and skills.

Even though we follow the procedures suggested in this section, certain children in a class will continue to be problems to the other group members and to us. Some will not succeed as well as the others. A few will seem to lack any interest in the work. Others will disturb the group by being overly aggres-

sive. And a small percentage will withdraw from group activity.

Each child is unique. Each case is different. But there are certain steps we can take that will be helpful in meeting each type of problem.

How Do We Help the Pupil Who Is Not Learning as Much as We Expect?

Some children do not learn what we hope they will learn in our classes. We may be tempted to call them "non-learners" or other derogatory names, but name-calling does not help them or relieve our sense of failure.

As long as a pupil continues as a member of our class, we cannot afford simply to classify him and stop trying to help him.

The most important step is to discover the cause of the pupil's failure to make the growth we hope he will attain. Through study of school records, conferences with the pupil, home visits, and discussions with other staff members, we will want to check the following points:

Is poor health responsible for his failure? When a student is not in top form physically, he will not acquire information as fast as he would otherwise. His attention is focused upon his physical disturbances. Or if he lacks sufficient food, his hunger may serve as a barrier to his acquiring the information and skills that we expect him to.

Are unmet emotional needs responsible for his failure? A child wants to belong, to be loved, and to have security. When neither the school nor the home nor the community provides these satisfactions, the child is so concerned about the lack that he is unable to make the progress that is expected of him.

Is a conflict in values responsible? When a student finds that his parents' beliefs conflict with those of his teacher, he may become confused. He doesn't know which to accept, and in his confusion he fails to take the steps that the teacher hopes he will. Value conflicts may also arise between the pupil and the teacher. They belong to different age groups and have different

purposes. In such a situation, any attempt to override the pupil will probably result in open rebellion or withdrawal. In an attempt to meet the situation, the pupil refuses to learn what we hope he will.

Another source of value conflict may develop between the pupil and other members of the group. When a youngster comes from a home with strong beliefs concerning certain types of behavior which are in conflict with the beliefs held by the other boys and girls in the class, he is caught between the desire to be accepted by the group and his allegiance to the values he has learned at home. Out of this disturbance may come interference with the learning we hope he will acquire.

Is it an intense worry? When a child worries about his hatreds, or whether he is like other people, or about the relationships in his family, he may not do well in his school work. If there is a divorce pending between his parents, or if his father is in jail, or if there is a drastic conflict between the boy and his stepfather, the focus of his attention is on other than school subjects.

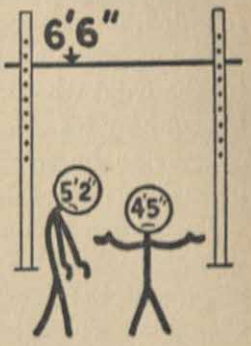
Is it overload? When a youngster is confronted by unreasonable demands by different teachers that call for more time than he can give to school work, he does all his work in a sloppy, haphazard manner. Or he may simply say, "What's the use," and quit altogether. Or the overload may be physical. The student may come to class so weary from outside activities or a job that he cannot give the school work his attention. His learning efficiency will necessarily be reduced.

Is it lack of background information or skill? Inadequate instruction in a previous class may have made his foundation in the subject being investigated so weak that he has great difficulty in understanding the concepts and words used.

Is it poor study conditions at home? Some youngsters come from homes in which there are no books, no newspapers, not even a radio. Such pupils suffer unjust handicaps when we require the use of such tools in carrying out the class work.

Is it the social-class structure? When parents find themselves

relegated to unsatisfactory economic and social strata, their attitude of frustration is transferred in some degree to their children, who bring this attitude to school. If a pupil shares his parents' lack of hope, his motivation is decreased and his learning in school is less efficient. If the student from a less-favored home is sensitive to discrimination on the part of other students, and feels that we favor certain youngsters and reject the group to which he belongs, this feeling of rejection will reduce the amount of desirable learning that he derives from a given experience.



Is it unreasonable standards? The imposition of unreasonable standards on boys and girls blocks their attempts to learn. When people are continuously unsuccessful, they lose their motivation. They may still want to succeed, but they feel that success is impossible in the situation. Eventually, they stop trying.

Is it overprotection? Some children have been so protected by their parents that they hesitate to go beyond the familiar. They want to check with us on each step. They want someone to whom they can turn. Since they have been cautioned time and again to do only what they are told to do, they are incapable of getting the greatest benefit from new experiences.

Any one of these factors may cause a child to be less successful than he could otherwise be. Each of these difficulties requires different treatment, but they all require that we know each child, that we plan with his parents, and that we adjust our requirements and our way of working to his individual problems. It does no good for us to say that we will treat all pupils alike, or to threaten a child with dire consequences if he does not change his behavior, or to tell him that he must adjust to the school. Our task is to help each pupil to live up to his potential, and we can do that only by adapting the program to his needs through joint planning with pupil and parent.

How Do We Help the Less Developed Child?

The term "less developed" is used deliberately here. It refers to the physically normal who for the time being appears to be retarded.

The variation in rate of growth sometimes causes difficulties for the child who develops slowly. He may be smaller, slower in acquiring his second teeth, later in entering adolescence. He appears to be retarded when in reality he is following his normal pattern of development.

Two famous tennis stars, both twenty-two years old, illustrate the point. One was six feet six, a potential national champion, and the other was six feet three, a former national champion. The six-foot-three youth said, "You would never guess it, but when we were fourteen, I was six inches taller than he was." He had matured faster in size and coordination but his friend had become a taller person.

Growth patterns vary. Some children mature earlier than others. In any group we have some children who are markedly less developed than others. They may be smaller and less coordinated. They may not write, or run, or dance as well as others. They may not be as interested in the opposite sex. Any of these conditions may handicap them in their social dealings with other members of the group.

This problem is particularly acute at the junior-high-school level, when children are entering adolescence. Some students grow rapidly in early adolescence, while others develop later. In junior-high-school classes, youngsters of the same age may vary as much as six or eight inches in height, and exhibit vast differences in body contour and in weight and muscular development. The problem is accentuated by the fact that some of the youngsters who find themselves less developed than the rest of their fellows at this age have, prior to this time, been physical peers in their group. They have not learned any of the techniques of meeting the problem involved in being smaller than their fellows.

Establishing good human relations in the class is the first step in helping the less developed child. If we can get the group to accept the idea that each member has a contribution to make, that each has a responsibility for helping the others grow, we have created an atmosphere in the class where differences in size, skill, or ability do not prevent acceptance and harmonious relations.

A second step that we can take is to encourage each youngster to make his own special contribution to the group. Discourage the underdeveloped child from competing with his classmates in areas in which he is always sure to lose. To make this approach requires opportunity for varied activities which permit youngsters with different types of skills to make their own special contributions. As competitiveness within the group is reduced, differences in physical development become of less concern to youngsters.

How Do We Help the "Uninterested" Child?

We have all seen children who appear to be uninterested. They sit in the classroom and say little. They watch what is going on, but as far as we can see they show very little reaction to it. When they are asked to offer suggestions they make no reply. They take up seat space, and that is about all, it seems, that they are contributing to the classroom situation.

Sometimes, as we follow these youngsters out into the community, we find that they display the same lackadaisical attitudes in their relationships with other boys and girls in out-of-school activities. If they are on the playground, they have to be forced to take part in activities. What can we do for an "uninterested" child?

Any hope that we have of helping him is based on two beliefs: One is that all children want to take part in what is going on around them. The other is that his seeming lack of interest in out-of-school or in-school activities may have come about as a result of so many failures that he has lost any hope

of success. Making these two basic assumptions is the starting point in helping the uninterested child.

One of the first steps is to put the child at ease. If he has failed so many times that he has lost confidence in himself, our task is to convince him that other people are anxious to help him and want to see him succeed. Much of the responsibility for developing this type of atmosphere in the classroom rests with us. If we can demonstrate these qualities in our relationship with the pupil and not evidence our discouragement or dissatisfaction with his lack of success, we may gradually build the willingness to venture. If we stress in our relationships with boys and girls the necessity for trying to do our best in every situation and for profiting from mistakes as well as from successful achievement, we provide additional encouragement. When "uninterested" boys and girls begin to feel that they are accepted and that they can learn from mistakes as well as from successes, they will gradually move out of their self-imposed isolation and become active in the group.

These first steps may take a long time.

> In a class in California, boys and girls were grouped together who had been unsuccessful for the first ten years of their school career. The teacher, who adopted the procedure just outlined, worked four months before any of the group began to respond. The youngsters had developed such a distrust of teachers and such a lack of faith in teacher sincerity that they refused to let down their defenses, even though the teacher tried to give them every sort of assurance—verbal and otherwise. It took four months before they accepted the truth of this teacher's statements and actions sufficiently to display an interest in class activities.

Once the "uninterested" student has advanced to the stage where action becomes possible, our function is to encourage him to decide for himself what activities will be most rewarding for him. He faces an uphill battle to gain self-confidence, and it is necessary for him to take his first steps in an area in which he feels most confident of success. We can't determine

this area. Nor can other students. The impetus must emerge from the desire of the "uninterested" youngster himself and his belief in his own potential. Under no circumstances should we ask him to undertake tasks beyond his ability.

The third step is to let him participate in the evaluation of what happened as he took the action. This evaluation may be no more than saying, "It was fun," or "This is something I learned." Or he may simply remain silent, with perhaps an implication that he will try again at another point. In any case, we refrain from exhibiting any negative reaction, or from pretending that his performance was good if it really wasn't. Encouragement is a much more satisfactory type of teaching activity than giving false statements concerning the success of an action. We wait and stress success when we see it, no matter how small it may be.

As soon as the student has advanced far enough to derive satisfaction from sharing in class projects, other members of the class should be encouraged to welcome him into the group. This second, or fifth, or fiftieth opportunity may be nothing more than a simple invitation to become a member of a work-group.

At no point during this process of working with an "uninterested" child do we attempt to stimulate him in the ordinary sense. He has received stimulation all the years he has been in school. He has been threatened. He has been pleaded with. He has been encouraged. He has been chastised. He has borne the brunt of many attempts to motivate him and to interest him in various topics. And to all of them he has failed to respond. These efforts have succeeded only in driving him further within himself. The only hope is to create an environment in which he feels free to let himself grow, in which he is not afraid to try.

The environment should also provide assistance to the youngster in becoming a more social person. Most "uninterested" youngsters have failed to achieve social success in their relationships with their fellows. As we work with the class in

improving social skills and in sharing these skills with one another, we create an environment in which the rebuffed child, the shy child—the "uninterested" child—can gain the confidence that will permit him to move out toward the frontiers that have formerly threatened him.

How Do We Help the "Aggressive" Child?

We have no trouble spotting the aggressive child. We can't avoid it—he makes himself known to us and to the group. We see him strike other children, we hear him make sarcastic remarks, we watch his attempts to exclude other youngsters from certain situations. We are afraid he will hurt another child. We are concerned about his monopolizing our time and energy. We resent his attacks on our personality and that of more submissive pupils. Many times we feel that we are doing the child and the world a favor by punishing him and preventing him from injuring the feelings and the physical well-being of others.

The studies of Dollard and others, however, tell us that aggression is the result of frustration. With this understanding, we see the aggressive child in a new light. We know that he is unable to achieve satisfaction by approved methods of behavior and that he is seeking ways of building his ego and gaining the type of satisfaction that is necessary to his own well-being. We find ourselves confronted with the problem of how to deal with this need for ego satisfaction and how to work with him in such a way that he can attain it without injuring those about him. We seek a way of treating him that will enable us to continue to exist as a balanced person with wholesome relationships with other youngsters. We are not superhuman and we resent, as do the other members of the group, the actions of the aggressive child. By accepting this

fact, we see that the problem of teaching the over-aggressive child is as much a problem of dealing with our own sensibilities as it is of dealing with the child himself.

Our big problem with the over-aggressive child is to help him discover that he can gain satisfaction out of situations in which other people are enjoying themselves too. Our emphasis is on helping him understand that the only way to true satisfaction is when other people around him are enjoying themselves and gaining satisfactions from the situation. This is not an easy concept for any of us to acquire, and it is far more difficult for a child than it is for an adult.

One of the first steps is to let the child know that he is loved. None of us are selfish in a situation in which there is plenty of everything. We are selfish about the love of others when love is not abundant enough to go around. We are selfish about our toys and begin to demand other people's toys when there are not enough for everyone. One of our first steps is to let the child know in many little ways, through glances, through a touch of the hand, through private conversations and doing things together, that we love and accept him.

As soon as the child is sure of our affection, we can gently but firmly insist that he engage in no action that is detrimental to other children. Simply diverting his attention is not enough. It may be necessary to take him by the arm and lead him aside so that we can talk with him. We have a responsibility to the aggressive child and to the other members of the group to say, "This is a type of behavior that, even though we love you, cannot be accepted in this group. It is harmful to the other members of the group."

The over-aggressive child is helped by participation in the process through which the total group sets up standards of behavior. As the group members discuss satisfactory ways of behaving and agree upon certain criteria by which to judge behavior, the decisions reached are impersonal. But at the same time he is afforded an opportunity to learn the types of be-

havior that are socially acceptable. Youngsters can be taught far more effectively through group action and opinion than they can through an expression of like or dislike by an adult.

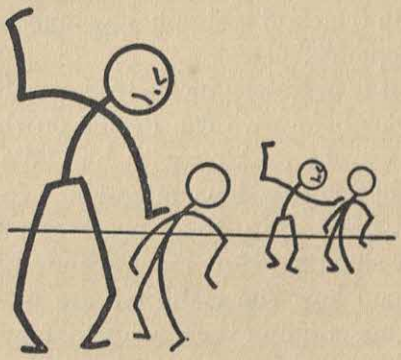
Aggressiveness decreases as there is opportunity for group work. Any situation that gives the aggressive boy or girl a chance to work with others is a learning situation in social relationships. His skill in living with others will be increased if he has a chance to analyze his experiences with a teacher who is sensitive to his problems and who helps him devise more effective social techniques at his request. Both factors are important—*opportunity to work in a group and assistance in analyzing his behavior.* If the group experience is not followed by analysis, the student may continue to make the same mistakes that he has always made and continue to grow more and more aggressive.

This process of guiding the aggressive student in his integration into the group is not easy. If we conduct our group work in a free atmosphere, his aggressiveness will probably grow worse before it gets better. The child will not believe what he finds and will test it out with even more violent behavior. Understanding, quietness, firmness, love, patience, and time are the only answers. Attempts to suppress him simply increase or divert his aggressiveness.

Another way of working with the aggressive child is to develop with him ways to utilize his aggressiveness. Some teachers make definite provision for boys and girls to work with clay or metal so that they will have an opportunity to pound and hit, thus working out their aggressiveness in a socially acceptable way. If the school has a good intramural sports program, all students have an opportunity to use their competitiveness to help the group achieve standing in the school. The aggressive child who can help his homeroom team win a school championship or bring the team through to victory in a crucial situation realizes that there are ways in which he can use his aggressiveness for the benefit of the group in which he is working. Another outlet is through working on the construction of

stage and room properties. When a child has a chance to hammer and nail and wrestle with pieces of equipment that are large and cumbersome, he works off his desire for physical aggression.

In dealing with the aggressive child, it is well to talk over his difficulties with him. Physical punishment simply multiplies the symptoms that he already feels. When he is punished physically, he feels even more that he is inadequate and that he has to fight back. But if he has an opportunity to discuss his problems with a sympathetic, understanding teacher, he gains a different impression of the way other people feel about him. He begins to learn that he has someone to whom he can turn for understanding and that he need not resort to the use of his



fists in order to solve his problems. As a check on the classroom environment, we can review our own behavior to see if the child's actions are reflecting the way in which we ourselves behave. Do his harsh commands to other children echo the type of directions he has heard us give to youngsters who are not behaving as we wish they would? Does his hitting of other youngsters duplicate our use of physical contact with youngsters to get them to do what we want? If we hope to help youngsters overcome aggressiveness, we must be sure that our own behavior is not aggressive.

We will need to talk with the child's parents to find out what

conditions at home may be responsible for his behavior. Is there a great deal of emotional disturbance in his home? Does he see his parents bickering constantly? Does he feel that he is not loved and wanted? Any of these factors could lead to strongly aggressive behavior at school. Or do the parents overemphasize the importance of getting ahead and make him unreasonably anxious to excel? Do they insist that the child always be the leader, the champion, the contest-winner? This type of parental pressure can make a child determined to seize the advantage in every situation. What are the manners in the home? Is the child encouraged to fight for his rights and to get what is coming to him regardless of the consequences to others? Are the parents and the other children in the home well mannered toward one another? Perhaps what we have labeled aggressiveness in the child is simply ignorance of what type of behavior is acceptable.

In any case, it is necessary for us to determine the cause of a child's behavior before we can decide on the most helpful and beneficial way of working with him. We must discover what it is the child needs—love, attention, a feeling of greater adequacy—and then satisfy those needs as effectively as we can in the class situation. How much we are able to help him will depend upon how successful we are in creating an atmosphere of cooperation in the classroom, how much time we can spare for him, and the extent of our physical endurance and emotional stability.

How Do We Help the Withdrawing Child?

Withdrawal, like aggression, is an attempt to meet a situation for which the child has not found a satisfactory solution.

First, it is necessary to determine the causes of withdrawal.

We can talk with the parents and with teachers who have had the child before to see what has been done to help him overcome his tendency to withdraw.

With the withdrawing child, however, there may be a greater reason for giving the child an opportunity to work with

us. We may be able to make it easier for him to succeed and increase his self-confidence. We can avoid trying to force him to become an active participant in the group. When force is applied to the withdrawing child, he withdraws even further. We can provide an atmosphere in which the child can relax and work in an atmosphere of encouragement, respect, and advice when it is asked for. We can encourage the child's friendship with one or two other pupils in the group who can be of help to him. If he can be helped to form a friendship with even one other child, he will gain tremendously in confidence and security.

Work in small groups is also an effective way to help withdrawing children gain confidence. Many children who are afraid in large groups find themselves drawn into a discussion in small groups by the enthusiasm of the other members. In a large group of twenty-five or more, the participation of all the members is not continuous. Five or six pupils may talk more than the others and some may not speak at all for as long as twenty or thirty minutes. But in a small group of three to six, everyone participates frequently in the conversation and even the withdrawing child gradually begins to participate more easily.

We will want to observe the withdrawing child closely to identify special contributions that he can make and special skills that he possesses. Once we have spotted certain unique abilities that will be of value to the group, we can try to create situations in which his contribution will be recognized by his fellow students. When a promising situation arises, we can turn to the withdrawing child and ask if he would like to make a contribution. But we never say, "This is the time for you to do the things that you can do so well." Instead, simply provide an opportunity that he can accept or decline as he wishes. Even though the child does not respond on the first five or six occasions, we continue to present similar opportunities. Gradually, he will begin to open up and will finally take the first feeble steps in the direction of active participation in the class.

Meeting individual differences is not a technique; it is a way of living. It includes accepting others, respecting their contributions, working for the kind of group operation in which each individual knows he has a part, and encouraging each pupil to give his best in each situation.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Ascertain the types of individual differences that are important.
2. Recognize that it is impossible for two people to grow in the same way from the same experience.
3. Assist pupils to secure chairs and work locations suited to their physical condition.
4. Establish group and individual rapport as the basis for individual conferences.
5. Utilize group study and research periods as time for individual conferences and planning.
6. Provide opportunity for the individual to suggest activities and ways of work in group planning sessions.
7. Encourage and accept different types of growth and expression in the class.
8. Supplement group objectives with individual objectives for each pupil.
9. Vary the type and amount of homework through group planning of tasks to be done.
10. Secure a wide variety of materials.
11. Organize different types of work areas within the classroom.
12. Encourage pupils to seek ways of helping one another.
13. Secure the help of the pupil in recording his individual progress.
14. Talk with a pupil about progress on an individual basis instead of comparing him with another pupil.
15. Base judgments on a variety of types of evidence.
16. Study the child's history and home when he is underachieving.

17. Stress importance of class members' helping each other.

18. Use encouragement rather than stimulation with the uninterested child.

19. Build group morale and structure as a way of helping the aggressive child.

Chapter 12

How Do We Guide the Individual Pupil?

Our success in meeting individual differences is conditioned by our approach to teaching. It is not a technique or a trick that we can apply when we discover a pupil who is markedly different from the others in our class. It involves getting to know each pupil, helping him discover his strengths, weaknesses, purposes, and values, planning with him what he should study, and helping him organize and evaluate his learning.

How Do We Learn To Know Our Pupils?

If we are going to be of real assistance to the individual, it is necessary that we get to know him as a person. We learn his name. We become familiar with his family and his background. We study his school record. We talk with him about his interests and concerns, and how he feels about people and school.

And we start all this at the very beginning of school. The techniques recommended for promoting good relations on the first day help us to become acquainted with our pupils. Have them introduce themselves and tell about their summer vacations, hobbies, books, movies, or sports. As pupils learn one another's names, faces, and interests, we do too.

An examination of the cumulative record of each pupil may provide us with valuable information. Such records usually give the test scores that the pupil has made on the various standardized tests used within the school system. They reveal

the level of achievement of the pupil at the time the tests were given. By comparing the intelligence test scores and the achievement test scores in various areas, we can get some idea of the extent to which a student is living up to the development that might be expected of him. When an eighth-grade pupil with an I.Q. of 100 is reading at the sixth-grade level and has arithmetic skills at the fourth-grade level, we have evidence that we should study the child to determine why he is not living up to the achievement that might reasonably be expected. The test scores do not tell us what is wrong. Rather, they are indications that the pupil may need help.

From the record we can discover the father's occupation, the approximate family income (which can be estimated from the type of work and location of home), other members of the family, and the pupil's personality and social poise as indicated by his behavior record and participation in activities. If the record includes a case history, we are indeed fortunate.

But if the school does not maintain pupil records, we are forced to move more slowly and to rely upon the use of indirect questionnaires, playground and classroom observations, and informal conversations.

A pupil's creative products are to some degree indicative of the type of person he is. The pictures that he paints, for example, reveal how he feels about certain things and some of the ideas and symbols that are important to him. Interests and needs are easier to determine at the elementary school level than at the secondary school level, because the younger children are more direct and a single teacher spends a greater portion of time with the same children.

A first-grade boy spent all his free art periods drawing pictures of horses and cowboys. His scenes ranged from prairie to mountains, but they always included horses, and cowboys firing at one another. Obviously, the boy's interests were centered on cowboys and the Old West. But equally important was the indication that he was not of a passive nature. All his pictures revealed action and, in most cases, conflict. His art work

suggested that one way to relate class work to the boy's motivation would be through references to the west and, secondly, that he would be striving for leadership and authority within the group in which he worked and lived. Such data, like test scores, provide us with clues but they cannot be interpreted intelligently without supplementary information.

The stories that a youngster writes record his interests, his fundamental skills, his creativeness in the expression of ideas, his awareness of color, and his observation of the inanimate objects of the environment. They suggest the features of his environment to which he responds most strongly. Since all persons respond to any situation in terms of their background, we can gain much information about the values, the goals and the past experiences of youngsters through their creative interpretations of their experiences.

Youngsters provide us with many significant clues to their personalities as they talk informally with one another about their hobbies and their reactions to world and community events. By listening to what they say in such sharing periods, we can learn their ambitions, fears, and interests. *If we want to teach boys and girls in terms of their individual capacities, interests, and needs, we must be willing to listen to them.* Many effective teachers have found it helpful to keep for each pupil a 3 x 5 card on which revealing comments are recorded verbatim.

Another technique for adding to our store of pertinent information about youngsters is to observe them closely as they engage in exploratory activities. A free period a day in which pupils may work on projects they choose, or a free reading period in the library in which they are free to select the stories or books that interest them will lead us to increased understanding of interests and needs. *A pupil constantly reveals himself through the free choices he makes.* It is almost impossible for us to learn anything but superficial facts about pupils if we insist on having them perform a program of activities arbitrarily decided upon by ourselves. Unless we provide them with freedom to use the classroom facilities in their own way for a

portion of the school day, we limit our opportunities to observe and know them.

Home visits, where possible, are also helpful.

> An Oklahoma teacher was teaching two sections of ninth-grade English. By the end of three months, one group was so far ahead of the other that she became concerned enough to investigate the causes. At the beginning of the year, she had tried to arrive in the community early to get acquainted with the town and with her students. But she had been able to visit only the homes of one section of her ninth-grade English classes. The students whose homes she had visited were those in the class that had been making the exceptional progress.

Obviously method is not limited to our activities in the classroom. Anything we do that gives us more understanding of pupils and lets them know that we are concerned about them contributes to the development of an emotional climate which makes learning more efficient.

How Do We Help a Pupil To Understand Himself?

The foundation stone of individualized instruction is helping each pupil to see himself honestly and realistically. Unless a pupil will accept himself and his present status as the starting point, it is very difficult for us to provide individual assistance.

A pupil must be able to talk freely with us about his emotions, beliefs, and attitudes. In order to do this, however, he must be able to accept himself as he is and to know that we accept him too. If we don't accept him, he cannot be honest with us. If we pronounce judgments about his behavior or tell him our answers to his problems, he withdraws and is denied the opportunity to know himself better.

An eleventh-grade student in an English class wrote:

> "But if you don't listen—
> Who will? . . .
> I can say what I want,
> Just like I've always
> Wanted to . . .

And I can tell you
How wonderful I feel
When you said
I could continue to write
Like this—
If I was honest with myself."

His teacher was in a position where she could help him know himself because she had his trust and had convinced him that she was willing to examine with him his deepest thoughts. Sometimes we may be shocked and repelled by what we see and hear, but we cannot help if we shy away from an unpleasant situation. We help a pupil clarify his confusion by encouraging him to state his beliefs. We help him to know himself through talking about himself. Our job is to reflect for a student what he says and thinks and feels so that he can understand himself. We also help him see implications of his present point of view which he may never have considered.

A teacher of five-year-olds followed this procedure:

> In my kindergarten, one child came to school after losing her grandfather during the summer. During the first two weeks of school her grandmother died. This child's relationships with both grandparents had been very close and the loss of both of them by death built up a tremendous fear of death and a great sense of insecurity. The child hurt inside and in the kindergarten became a disruptive force. She kicked and hit other children. I had to be continually on guard to prevent her from physically injuring another child. Finally, one day after the little girl had kicked another girl in the face, I asked her to remain after the others had left. I looked the little girl directly in the eye and said, "I know why you try to hurt other people. You hurt inside and you want other people to hurt too. You have lost your grandparents and because they are gone you hurt and you are trying to make other people unhappy. It can't work that way." Then I began to talk with her as to how she could work off these feelings of hurt in a way that would not bring similar feelings to other people and as we talked we decided that whenever she felt that she just had to kick or to

hit something she would go to the cot in the nurse's room and lie down on the cot and kick until she had had her fill of kicking or until the hurt was gone for the moment. This procedure worked. The little girl continued to be a disruptive influence in the kindergarten but she no longer physically hurt other children.

At a higher level the teacher would probably have been less willing to verbalize the difficulty for the child. Further talks would be necessary at any age level to tell whether the procedure was working as well inwardly as outwardly.

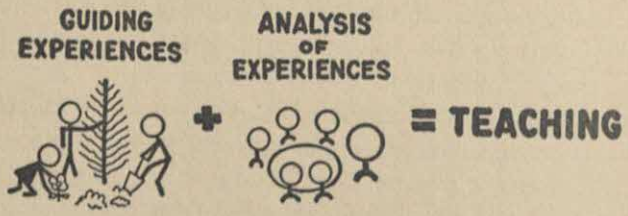
Situations in which youngsters can identify themselves with other persons and analyze how they would have reacted in a similar situation provide them with an opportunity to examine and analyze themselves. Many youngsters are too shy in a class group to state their beliefs or their problems openly. But a timid student will often discuss the behavior of a character in a movie, a socio-drama, or a play and in so doing will make valid analyses of his own emotions and convictions.

We are able to help youngsters to analyze themselves by providing them an opportunity to state their beliefs. By making their own beliefs or conclusions the starting point of a study, we make it possible for each individual to discover himself.

In a college class in methods of teaching, each student was asked at the beginning of a unit on learning to state what he really believed learning was and how it took place. In the process of making such a statement in their own words, the students discovered what they believed. As the unit progressed, each student was constantly asked to refer back to the statements that he had made in the beginning to see what changes were taking place in his thinking. At the end of the unit, each student was asked to rewrite what he believed learning was and how it took place. Thus, even though the attention of the students was centered around a particular body of subject matter, each was making an individual analysis in terms of a statement of beliefs that he had formulated for himself. By asking students to clarify their position for themselves, we

increase the chance that our teaching will help each individual to know himself.

It has become apparent by now that the approach to teaching that we have been discussing makes it impossible for us to set up stereotyped assignments to which we expect all the youngsters to react in the same way. It does away with telling pupils what to do and how well they have done it. It makes teaching, instead, a process of sharing experiences and then en-



couraging students to interpret and analyze their experiences in terms of the values that were involved. Teaching, then, becomes a process of helping pupils understand their experiences, and is conducted largely through encouraging them to talk out their reactions. *Teaching involves (1) setting the stage for experiences and (2) creating a situation in which those experiences can be analyzed.* Subject matter is organized by each student on the basis of the conclusions and generalizations he draws from his experiences; it is not presented in an organized form to which the individual is supposed to accommodate his purposes and his interpretations.

When a pupil finds he can be honest with us, we are in a position to help him clarify his goals. And his goals are the basis for judging his status, his strengths, and his weaknesses! We teach as we talk with him about his ambitions, his daydreams, and his wishes. When we ask questions that help him decide which of two alternatives he wants or to see more clearly the implications of his hopes for present action, we are serving an essential educative function.

If a student consults with us about his plans we can assist him to obtain a realistic picture of his needs.

Standardized tests provide one means by which he can learn to know himself. Performance on tests for which group norms have been established provide him with a reference by which he can make more intelligent judgments on his own status and progress. As he secures the results of such tests he has an opportunity to form a more objective picture of his standing in relation to others and to decide for himself what steps need to be taken. Pupil-teacher analysis of his pattern of work and his products is another source of data concerning his present status.

It is not our function to make the judgments about the evidence obtained. If we allow ourselves to move into the position of judging, we prevent the pupil from knowing himself by focusing his attention on how to present his strengths for our approval. Our role is to assist in the inventory of skills, knowledges, and attitudes, and the development of understanding that strengths and weaknesses are not absolutes, that they are determined by the outcomes sought.

A sense of security and increased confidence will be obtained by many students from the knowledge that all people do not need to judge themselves by the same standards. For example, a pupil seeking to become a musician does not need to consider lack of skill in library research as a weakness. Neither must a boy planning to be a chemist obtain skill in writing poetry or painting. The needs of the individual are determined by a contrast of his present status with his present hopes.

As a student begins work designed to help him achieve his purposes, we serve as a resource person who helps him locate the facts and materials which will make it possible for him to formulate his own conclusions, generalizations, and interpretations. The emphasis is on individual learning and individual interpretation. Only by exploring a problem on his own, by testing data for himself, and by arriving at his own conclusions and interpretations can the individual pupil discover himself.

We further the student's self-knowledge by teaching the technique of self-evaluation: how to decide on purposes; how to record progress; how to judge the evidence recorded in terms of the criteria established; how to revise plans in terms of the judgments made. Through our help in his constant self-evaluation of his day-by-day performance, the student gradually becomes capable of making a valid analysis of his strengths and weaknesses. This analysis is not something that is accomplished in a day or a week. It is a continuous process. We help by working with boys and girls in such a way that they say to themselves, "What are my goals? What are my strengths? What are my weaknesses? What activities should I undertake in order to become the kind of person I want to be?" These questions will be phrased in different language at different grade levels, but the pattern of evaluation is the same for all students.

How Do We Help a Pupil Decide What To Study?

In planning with a youngster what he should study, we need to do all we can to discover what his goals are and to utilize them as a starting point in his learning experience. How can we learn his goals? Sometimes, just by listening to him talk. Or by bringing him into the planning so that he can express his goals. By giving him an opportunity to say, "These are the things I want from this unit." Basically we start with the assumption that his purposes are as worth while and important as our own.

A pupil is not always sure of his purposes. He may be accustomed to doing what he is told. Or he may want to do so many things that he finds difficulty in making decisions. We can help him by raising such questions as, "What do you like to do?" "What types of activity give you satisfaction?"

These questions bring out into the open short-term purposes at least. Some of the paper-and-pencil devices such as *The Wishing Well* for elementary school children and the *Kuder Preference Checklist* for secondary school pupils are also useful

in helping boys and girls identify or isolate their interests. Each pupil's answers give us a starting point in planning with him.

But immediate interests are not enough at all levels. Our questions should sample long-range purposes as well. "What kind of person do you hope to become?" "What do your parents want you to be?"

One of our functions is to help each student extend into the future the goals that he has. As he comes to identify his long-range goals, his purposes become more worth while.

An effective contrast between immediate interests and long-term purposes permits the youngster to form a clearer picture of his needs. He can see that his ambition to be an engineer is not furthered by his constant interest in playing basketball and in dating. If he continues to make such comparisons over a period of time, he will increase in his ability to make wise decisions.

He may determine his purposes by finding how his present status differs from his picture of himself.

> In one eleventh-grade class, pupils were accustomed to follow only immediate interests. As a part of a state-wide study of secondary schools, however, they took some achievement tests in the fields of social studies, language, arts, science, and mathematics. They ranked at the 11th percentile, the 9th percentile, the 51st percentile, and the 65th percentile on the four tests. Yet their home environments and intellectual abilities should have put them all in the upper percentiles, had normal progress been occurring in the areas measured by the tests. Should the teacher tell youngsters how they scored on the achievement tests? He decided in the affirmative. When the students found that they were not achieving at the level that they believed they should, they revised their class program and made provision for individuals to concentrate on the areas in which they were doing poorly. In this case, test scores revealed a need of which the pupils had not been aware. They were not measuring up to their concept of themselves and their abilities. The recognized need, not the test scores, motivated them to plan their work.

Tests simply describe present status. The difference between *what a student is doing* and *what he expects of himself* is the most fruitful area in which to start individual work plans.

Of course, there is one major limitation in planning exclusively in terms of pupil purposes—our own lack of knowledge and skill. Pupils should be made aware of the boundaries within which we can be of assistance.

We need to indicate the subject-matter areas within which we are capable of providing guidance. We state our special competences and indicate our experience. Then the students can determine for themselves how they can best relate work with us to their own purposes. This process of connecting the pupil's purposes and goals with the range of experiences available in the immediate situation is essential.

Naturally, not every one of a student's goals can be accommodated within a given class. A girl may be concerned with increasing her charm, but it would not be within the limits of the algebra class to assist her in working for that goal. A boy may want to be a star baseball player, but it would not be the function of the teacher of social studies to work with him in developing such skills. But we can assist each pupil to determine which of his goals can be furthered by the work at hand.

This limitation is not so drastic as it may seem, since every pupil has a wide variety of purposes.

At times we may be so intent on a limited range of goals that we fail to recognize a pupil's purposes or to see the full potential in his proposed activity.

John, who has a "reading block" that we are working on, still has not become interested in reading for pleasure. He will listen when read to, but then his attention span is short. As for finding something himself and reading silently, John is not interested. His real interest is electricity. But it's hard or impossible to find something about electricity—the real intricacies of it—written on John's reading level (second-grade). He busies himself drawing complicated diagrams. During a regular library period, John very rarely even looks at a picture

book. He has been the challenge of the year! We have succeeded in building up other abilities, but not reading.

When the pupil's purpose, whether he be a second-grader or a high-school senior, is constructive we promote efficient learning by working with it rather than against it.

Some teachers have attempted to relate all the school experiences of a student to a particular vocational goal. But that is only one of the multitude of goals that every youngster has. The wise teacher will help each student identify several of his goals and then will help him decide which of them that teacher can help him attain.

There are other limitations, too, on how fully pupils can implement their desires. Both time and resources are limited. For instance, although it would be very desirable to help a pupil undertake a long-term study of electronics, the school may not have the money to buy the necessary equipment. And the necessary reference works may not be available either in the school library or elsewhere in the community. In such a situation, it would be unsatisfactory planning for the student to set up a complicated study in the area of electronics. Such a plan would lead only to frustration.

Limitations should be applied cautiously, however. They may be cases of self-deception.

Free and inexpensive material is available in large quantities. Our librarians can help us discover it or we may locate it by examining listings such as those prepared by such agencies as H. W. Wilson. The resource people and the possible experience in the community should be explored thoroughly before we rule out a study on the basis of lack of material. It is much easier to secure material for study by one pupil than for an entire class, and an interested student may tap the resources of the community as part of his homework.

Neither is time a major limitation. Although we may decide we do not have enough time to carry through certain activities, the primary question for the individual is how he will use the time he has available with us. Actually such a situation

is good because it causes the student to sift his purposes and decide what is really important for him.

In brief, we assist the individual to decide what to study by determining his goals, contrasting his immediate interests with his long-range purposes, ascertaining the resources available, and selecting the activities which he can carry to successful conclusion in the situation.

How Do We Help a Pupil Develop a Plan of Work?

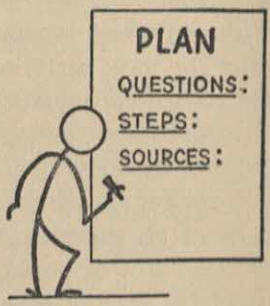
After we have helped the pupil select the project he is to undertake, we have the responsibility for assisting him to formulate a plan of work that will attain his purposes.

One of the first steps is defining sub-problems. This can be a very simple operation, in which the child simply states his questions. One question posed at the beginning of the study may be enough, but it is more likely that he will continue to ask questions over a period of time, as he delves further into the topic. At any rate, it is necessary for the student to make a clear statement of his problem and to list as many of the sub-problems as he can identify at the very beginning of the study.

Secondly, we help the student survey available resources: what books are in the library; what material is contained in the textbooks; what free materials are available; what people in the community can provide information; what places should be visited to learn more about the problem. In making this survey of resources, neither we nor the pupil can identify them all. Other people will certainly be able to help. The librarian, for instance. Each student should become acquainted with the vertical files of clippings and pictures which the library maintains. He should also become acquainted with the various sources that list free materials so that he can collect and bring to school anything that will be valuable to his study. And other teachers may be asked for suggestions on ways of getting information. That means, of course, that we will need to know the backgrounds and experiences of our fellow faculty mem-

bers. Another source that the student will want to tap in gathering materials will be other class members. We can encourage boys and girls to share their materials and to ask one another to contribute materials that will be useful in conducting individual researches.

As a student undertakes a study, he will need to develop a plan, to state the questions that are to be answered, and to outline the procedure and materials that will be used in finding the answers. This plan of work becomes the blueprint of the study, the design of the research. By writing out the plan of the study, the student has a means of knowing, at any point along the way, where he is and what remains to be done. The written plan becomes a source of security to both the student and to us. The use of written plans enables us to supervise simultaneously many activities in the classroom. They permit us to refresh our memory on individual projects and guide us as we help each pupil to evaluate his progress and plan his next steps.



Not all the research can be conducted in the classroom. Sometimes pupils will want to work in the library or at other places outside the classroom. If the schedule is too rigid for individual research during a class period, we may need, as a temporary measure, to plan with students ways of carrying on individual research during out-of-school hours in their home. In the meantime, we will want to work for a change in school policy that will recognize the importance of individual work.

In planning individual work with a student, time should be spent in thinking with him about how he will share his experience. Some of his findings may be valuable to other people, or may represent a special contribution to his class or his school. This emphasis on sharing the results of one's labors with other people and with the school constitutes one of the important learnings in developing citizenship in boys and girls. It

needs to be a part of any planning between the teacher and the individual student.

It is apparent then, that developing a plan of work with an individual follows the same pattern as planning with a group. Individual planning is easier, however, because less time must be spent in removing or compromising conflicts of purposes and ideas about procedures.

How Do We Help a Pupil Consolidate His Learning?

Since no two students can have the same experiences, and since the most useful organization of subject matter is one that the individual creates from his experience, each student will have to master the techniques of consolidating and organizing his own learning.

A feeling of achievement is promoted by organizing the results of an experience. If we do not help youngsters arrive at some sort of organization of information, we leave within them the feeling that the teaching has been haphazard, the learning without purpose, and the achievement limited. But when we do help them formulate their own generalizations, we increase their sense of progress and heighten the usefulness of their learning.

Keeping a scrapbook or a log often helps a student to work out his own organization. As he pulls together the experiences that he regards as meaningful, he has an opportunity to see whether they present a hodgepodge or a definite pattern. He begins to organize his learning. This organization is his own and expresses his own interpretation of what he feels and knows.

We make possible individual organization of knowledge by permitting many different patterns of record-keeping. When we prescribe in detail the kind of material that is to go into a log and the form that is to be followed, we prevent students from devising the types of organizations that are most significant for them.

We also help by asking youngsters to review, from time to

time, the generalizations they have reached, to see whether or not any basic conflicts exist among them. When we ask a student, "But how does that statement tie in with the one you made yesterday?" we are inviting him to analyze the relationships that are developing in various areas of his learning. Questions that get at the internal consistency of beliefs expressed, that challenge the implications of a conclusion drawn from one experience as it applies to a different situation, that force a student to see possible applications of the proposal that he is making, all assist the student to organize the information that he has gained into a meaningful pattern.

Generalizations formed should be functional. One outcome we seek in the organization of knowledge is the formation of standards by which to judge future experiences. As a student deals with various types of source material, we encourage him to formulate for himself criteria by which he judges movies, books, radio programs, art, speeches, or research. Through his living in the class and community, as well as through contact with reference material, we strive to get him to organize his beliefs about human relations into definite criteria that he will be able to apply in evaluating the quality of living in a given situation.

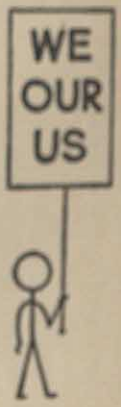
Our knowledge is often clarified and organized by the very act of sharing it with other people. Consequently, if we can create situations in which pupils have an opportunity to share the results of their learning with other persons or with other groups, we assist them to clarify and organize the information they have gathered.

The evaluation process itself assists in the organization of information. As we say to a group of students, "What have we learned?" "How far have we come?" "What are the next steps?" we are helping them formulate a structure of the information which is satisfactory to them. By asking them to state at the end of an experience the ideas that have been most significant to them, we assist them to analyze and classify the conclusions that have emerged from their experience.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Study the cumulative record of each child.
2. Compare achievement score with ability indices.
3. Examine a pupil's creative production for words and symbols and topics that are used frequently.
4. Listen to pupils talk about themselves.
5. Provide opportunity for a choice of activities.
6. Visit each pupil's home, if possible.
7. Help each pupil learn as much as possible about his values, attitudes, purposes, skills, interests, and abilities.
8. Be willing for pupils to say what they think.
9. Reflect for students their beliefs and values.
10. Analyze with pupils their interpretations of their in-class and out-of-class experiences.
11. Organize class activities around individual or group study of problems important to the individuals involved.
12. Help each pupil to state his purposes, immediate and long-term. Share with pupils the information available about his present status.
13. Clarify with pupils the limitations (in time, materials, and resources) of the situation.
14. Ask each pupil to formulate a plan of work.
15. Encourage each pupil to collect and share materials.
16. Make possible the collection of information in out-of-class situations.
17. Use record-keeping as a way of helping the individual student to organize his learning.

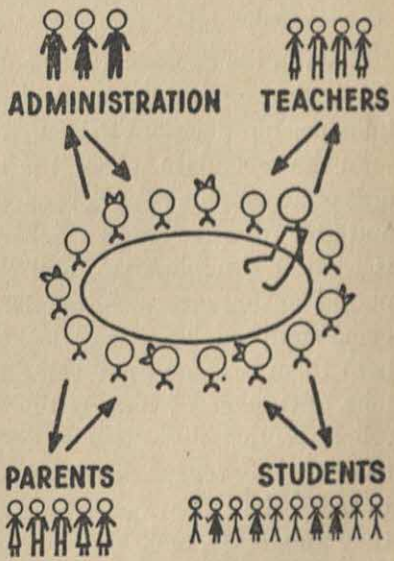
Teaching Is Skill in Cooperation



Chapter 13

How Do We Work with Persons Outside the Class Group?

Our class does not exist on a little island. It is affected by other teachers, by the classes around it, by the student government, by the school administration, by the parents, and by the community. We must be concerned with helping the group establish the kind of relationships which will enrich its own living and the living in the school and in the community.



How Do We Work with Other Teachers?

The pattern of teaching in other classes affects the way we can work with our own class. In all schools, secondary schools especially, the prevailing faculty point of view toward discipline, homework, trips, and seating arrangements, for example, necessarily influences our own teaching procedures.

A teacher in a New York City elementary school believed in democratic living in the classroom. As she began to work with

third-graders she brought them into the planning, had them assist in making decisions concerning discipline and what they were going to study, had them evaluate with her their experiences, and had them use their own judgments as a basis for improvements. When this third grade moved on to the fourth grade the next year, they were confronted with a teacher who believed that she should make all the decisions and that youngsters should do only what they were told, without asking questions. She found that the new class objected to teacher-domination and rebelled against imposed authority. Consequently, she complained to the principal against the type of teaching that the third-grade teacher had been doing. The principal, in turn, called the third-grade teacher to his office and told her that she would have to conform to the pattern of discipline that existed in the school. The third-grade teacher resigned.

Even in the elementary school, where we spend most of the day with the same pupils, the opinions of our colleagues must influence our decisions to some degree.

In the secondary school, the problem of varying our standards of acceptable behavior is accentuated by the fact that boys and girls usually change teachers every period. If one teacher is a strict disciplinarian, and the teacher in the succeeding period encourages self-direction, students will naturally become confused. They may decide that the teacher who tries to help them become more self-directing is "easy" and begin to take advantage of him. If the total discipline pattern of the school, with only a few exceptions, is largely authoritarian, students may regard the classrooms where they are encouraged to make their own decisions as places where they can do as they please. Or, once they begin to make real progress in self-direction, they may begin to question the other teachers and rebel in classes in which they are not given a chance to participate.

We may find as we move to a freer type of class operation that we are running into difficulty with the adjoining classes. Boys and girls working together in groups are noisier than

classes conducted according to a question-and-answer pattern. As pupils talk and think together and become enthusiastic about their work, their excitement leads to higher voices and a greater volume of noise. Teachers in adjoining rooms may feel that such behavior is disrupting their own class procedures. If this is the case, it is necessary to plan with our group ways in which we can control our noise. We can use it as a problem in living together and seek a group solution.

Even the way pupils pass from one class to another may become an issue. For example, if the school has a regulation that boys and girls must walk from one class to another two-by-two on the right side of the hall, we cannot decide to promote self-direction by allowing our class to work out their own method for going through the halls. If we do, we will encounter opposition from the rest of the faculty, and the administration will probably rule with the majority against us and our attempt to help pupils achieve self-discipline.

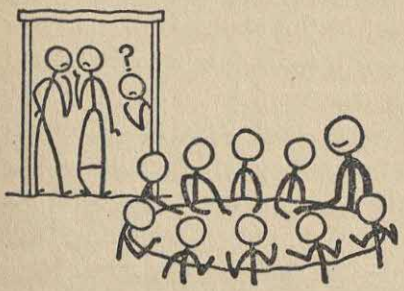
Homework is another area in which agreement among teachers concerning policy is desirable. In the high school, particularly, the type of homework given by one teacher affects the total program. If students are accustomed to having specific, day-by-day assignments, with daily or weekly tests to check on whether or not they have done them, they will find it hard to adjust to a situation in which they have a voice in setting up assignments which are to be worked on over a relatively long period of time. They lose a sense of security as they move from a very specific kind of assignment to the study of long-term problems, with no specific detail for each individual to carry out. If we do not make specific assignments, we will find that some children will concentrate on the work required of them by other teachers. The pressure of the other teachers' assignments causes the youngsters to let assignments of a more general, long-term nature "ride," until we too are obliged to apply pressure.

A teacher who goes into a new school should first determine the pattern to which the youngsters are accustomed, and then

move slowly toward a type of assignment that seems more satisfactory. Too sudden a change may confuse students, or lead them to become dissatisfied with classes in which the pattern is different. It may be necessary to give teacher-made assignments, at the beginning. But gradually the youngsters' suggestions for improvement can be permitted to exercise more and more influence. Once the pupils have a part in planning a more satisfactory type of assignment, they will assume responsibility for carrying through on the agreements they reach with us.

Even though we are convinced of the value of taking field trips into the community, we may find it difficult in secondary schools to have the boys and girls leave the building for two or three hours during the school day. Such an absence would mean that they would have to miss other classes.

Unorthodox seating arrangements may be another source of disagreement. In the secondary school, where from three to five teachers may occupy the same room during a given day, the furniture arrangement in one period affects the work of the teacher who occupies that room in the next period. If our class moves into small circles for group work, we may receive complaints from teachers who wish to have the chairs all in straight rows. It helps if we plan with the students to have chairs returned to their original position at the end of the sessions.



These are only a few of the misunderstandings that can arise among fellow faculty members unless precautions are taken to avoid them. Like the pupils, we are also members of a social group—the faculty. We need to take the time to talk together about what we are trying to do with boys and girls, arrive at some common agreements that will guide our work, and define

areas of disagreements so that we can study them together. Faculty members need to work out some degree of consistency in their work with boys and girls, to insure that they are not trying to develop conflicting values. Otherwise, the youngsters will find themselves caught in the conflict between the different philosophies, and may become cynical about them all.

Many faculties have worked on these problems. In some schools, student-faculty committees have formulated policies on conduct and homework, and individual classes are permitted to work out a pattern that is consistent with the school policy. If any class is dissatisfied with an existing policy, they try to influence the school-wide committee to change it.

Teachers who believe in the importance of community experiences have sought total faculty agreement on a policy concerning activities which take pupils away from the school. When such an agreement can be worked out, the individual teacher has an easier time making arrangements with other teachers for taking a class into the community for longer than the regular class period. Although a set policy does restrict individual freedom to some degree, it promotes better working relationships within the faculty group.

If such a policy cannot be developed, we are limited by the extent to which we can work out arrangements with other cooperative teachers to share time that has been allocated to us in the normal schedule.

On the matter of different furniture arrangements some schools have eased the situation by making various adjustments in scheduling. The staff tries to arrange for one teacher to remain in the same room all day, or, if that isn't possible, to schedule teachers who have the same patterns of work to use the same room. If the administration conceives of its function as helping teachers create the best possible conditions for teaching, these schedule adjustments will be regarded, not as nuisances, but as worth-while contributions to improved learning situations.

Not all associations with other teachers are restrictive, how-

ever. Actually, other teachers provide us with one of our richest resources. Through conversation and visits, we can gain many new ideas about ways to help boys and girls. If we encourage a sharing of materials, our teaching aids can be multiplied. We can form teams of teachers who supplement one another. For example, in a Colorado school, teams of science, English, and social studies teachers exchange class groups whenever one class is undertaking a project in which the competency of another specialist is needed.

> In a Tulsa junior high school, specific groups of teachers are organized. As far as possible, they teach the same pupils and have the same period free for planning. Three days a week they meet together to discuss individual pupils and what each teacher can do to help. The other two weekly planning periods are used for counseling with students.

Any school can devise ways in which staff members can work together to help pupils and one another. It's up to us to take the leadership in encouraging joint planning and thinking in the staff.

Time spent in pre-school planning conferences, in week-end conferences at camp, in faculty meetings, or around the coffee pot or coke machine at the end of the school day is helpful in uniting the thinking of a school staff. We can assist in the development of mutual understanding and cooperation by letting the administration know that we want such experiences and by helping the staff tackle problems and work out agreements.

How Do We Work with Other Classes?

Each class group should feel that it is contributing to the welfare of the student body of the entire school. Through such a feeling, boys and girls achieve a sense of belonging and pride in the school that they attend. We need to think through with our class the contributions they can make to the total student body.

Sincere interest by the class in ways in which it can contribute to the total school group will probably come only after

the members of the group have developed a sense of belonging to the class unit itself. It is hard for any individual to think about how a group can contribute to a larger group unless he feels a sense of belonging and high morale in the group of which he is a part.

One specific contribution that a group can make is to perform some service for the school. The boys and girls may examine the daily program to see where there is need of assistance. Does the library have enough assistants to keep all the books in place? Are there enough workers to prepare newspaper clippings for the vertical file? Are there ushers to help people find seats and get programs at school affairs? Are there hospitality committees to welcome guests at school? Are there safety committees to safeguard the students who attend the school? Is there a school newspaper? Is help needed in beautifying the school grounds? Would it be helpful to have a clean-up squad? Could the class be of assistance in making the cafeteria more attractive? Could the cafeteria operators use more help in serving? Should studies be made of traffic patterns or of behavior in assemblies?

A group that really accepts school improvement as one of its responsibilities can find many ways to make the school a better place in which to live. Some classes have assumed responsibility for the preparation and distribution of mimeographed materials, or have accepted the job of keeping certain portions of the playground clear. Others have volunteered to serve as safety monitors. And still others have spent their time preparing murals for the school walls. It doesn't matter what type of service the group decides to perform. The important element lies in knowing that their being in the school makes a difference, that they are making a real contribution in the life of the total school group.

Or, on another level, a class may decide to share its learning with other groups. Some fifth-grade classes, for example, develop plays which they present to first- and second-grade classes. One ninth-grade English class writes and stages a play

for presentation to other ninth-grade classes. This type of sharing is a stimulating experience, both to the students who perform the activity and to those who are given a chance to see what other classes in the school are doing. It often leads directly to more rewarding activities in both groups.

Inviting other classes to visit our class and to inspect our work increases friendliness in the school and gives our class an opportunity to get better acquainted with a greater number of boys and girls. It also leads to the development of certain specific skills: how to prepare an invitation; how to welcome guests; how to share experiences in a modest and unassuming manner; how to converse with guests in a way that will put them at their ease; how to serve refreshments and conduct a social period; how to bid guests farewell with a gracious invitation to come again.

Sometimes joint projects can be devised that will permit students from different classes to work together. One teacher describes her experience as follows:

> I thought that the children in my class needed practice in working more closely with other grades in the school, so just before Easter I asked the class if they would be interested in working on a project with the other fifth-grade group. We decided that a library exhibit would be a good project to undertake. Since all six grades in our school use this library, I knew that we would have to include some material in our project that would be of interest to the younger children. (We speak of teaching children to be "world-minded" but we sometimes miss a good teaching technique when we fail to train children to think not only of their own class but to go beyond that and to think of other classes; of their school and of their community.)
>
> When the various committees from the two rooms met to confer with each other, the "fur flew" at first. Each room seemed to think that it was a sort of competition that they had entered and each wanted to outdo the other in thinking of things that they could do that would be better than what the other fellow

was doing. After they had worked together for several days, they found that they could produce better results if they worked more cooperatively—for example, John, from the other room, had a story on training certain wild animals and when he found that Sam, from my room, had received pictures of these animals from Barnum, Bailey and Ringling Brothers, they found that by combining the pictures and the book they had an interesting and stimulating exhibit as their contribution to the group enterprise. An interesting thing about this experience was that both of these classes had been doing group work fairly successfully in their own rooms but when they got together there didn't seem to be much carry-over. However, they finally found that the same principles of group work that they followed in their own rooms applied when they did interclass work and I think that this was one of the most valuable learnings from this experiment—principles of group work learned in the classroom apply to all group situations.

During our planning sessions we appointed children to visit each of the lower grades to explain what we were trying to do and to invite them to visit the library to see what had been done. We appointed guides for these visits. The fifth-graders who participated in this part of the project were so enthusiastic about their work with the younger children that they suggested reading stories to these children.

Classes may also share resources and materials. Even if we ourselves, together with the class members, bring in all the materials that we can collect, there will still not be an adequate supply for dealing with all the topics that students will want to investigate. This shortage can be reduced by having all the classes share their materials with one another. Two seventh-grade English classes, for example, may not deal with the same topic at the same time. The materials assembled in one room can be used by the other class when it studies the unit at a later date. Or, if the pupils in one class invite a resource person with experiences that would be interesting and valuable to other classes, they may offer their fellow students an opportunity to join with them in listening to the speaker.

Some schools have set up joint planning committees composed of students from various classes that are working in the same subject-matter field. These committees meet on a weekly or semi-weekly basis. At their joint planning sessions, they discuss the various activities that they are going to engage in. Where possible, they plan ways of sharing experiences as well as materials. These inter-class planning groups have three benefits: (1) They permit greater coordination of the program. (2) They stimulate new ideas. Students get suggestions for projects that they would never have thought of otherwise. (3) They provide more students an opportunity to serve in a representative capacity and to have experiences in planning.

Some schools arrange for both small and large assemblies. In the large assemblies, various clubs or classes prepare and present programs that they feel will be important and of interest to the total student body. In the small assemblies, various groups with homogeneity of interests come together to share the results of various activities carried on within the classes. In secondary schools where this sharing is not an established pattern, we may introduce it by inviting other classes that meet at the same period to join with our class and share the results of their learning experiences. This can be done within the normal schedule.

An important relationship of the class, sometimes neglected, is that with younger children. In some communities children work out their antagonisms and frustration on those younger than themselves. We can help combat this tendency, if it exists in our class, by creating a classroom environment in which children do not experience violent frustrations and by undertaking projects where pupils can assist less mature schoolmates.

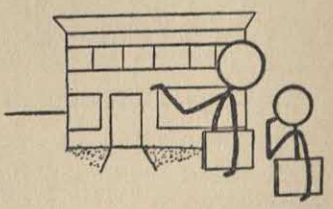
> In one rural high school, one-fourth of the juniors and seniors belong to a leadership organization that serves the school. During periods when they are not in classes, they serve as assistants to teachers in the industrial arts shop, on the playground, on the school farm, or wherever they can provide needed leadership. They do anything that will make possible

a richer program for the elementary and junior-high-school pupils. Through these experiences, they gain a greater understanding of human growth and development, and progress in their sense of responsibility for younger children.

Our remarks may affect the attitude students adopt toward those younger than themselves. Comments such as: "That is the way a kindergarten child would behave," or "You are not in elementary school now," belittle pupils in lower grades and stimulate a sense of superiority which we do not intend to generate.

Friendliness in the school can be directly promoted through inter-room social activities. The group may want to hold parties for students from other rooms or to entertain groups from the community. At such affairs, it will be necessary to take precautions to insure that the groups really intermingle. As hosts, pupils in our class must take the first step to see that their guests feel welcome and at home. They have the primary responsibility for making the party a success.

Pupils who are in school for their first year need special help. Can the pupils in our class be of service to them? Is there a big sister or big brother program in the school? Would it be desirable to develop one?



Pupils can perform a real service to their school by providing more effective ways of spreading information. They might volunteer to initiate a school paper, for example. Or they might offer suggestions for improving the one that is already being published, undertaking to provide new columns and features.

No group can exist by itself alone. What happens anywhere in the school affects every class. If one class paints a mural in the hallway and makes the school a more attractive place, others will want to do something to make the school more beautiful too. A class cannot expect the school to improve unless it takes some initiative for bringing about improvement.

As a staff member, we assist in developing a unified school program by learning about existing practices, by ascertaining the amount of interchange of ideas and materials, by encouraging total staff thinking on common problems, by seeking faculty members who will share with us, and by aiding our class to find ways of planning and working with other classes. We teach democratic cooperation by the way in which we live.

How Do We Work with the Student Council?

The student council is the means by which student opinion can be formulated and utilized. It is the organization through which any class group may make its contribution to the development of school policy.

We naturally want all members of the class with which we work to have access to information from the student council. When the council is made up of representatives from each homeroom, the problem is easy. Each representative brings back to his class a report on the actions and procedures of the student council. But if representation is based on some other plan, we will want to devise with pupils procedures by which we can get up-to-date reports of the activities of the council and keep fully informed on new developments in the school program.

Information will have to flow in the other direction as well—from each small group to the student council. So the members of the class will also want to devise an effective means of drawing the council's attention to ideas that they think are valuable. One way is to have a class secretary keep a record of the decisions made within the class that the group feels should be referred to the total student body. These can either be carried to the student council by the class representative or sent directly to the president of the student council.

One of the procedures that make student government effective is a referral back to the student body of issues and problems that are before the council. A class can encourage this democratic procedure by instructing its representative con-

stantly to call to the attention of the other council members the desirability of taking samplings of total student opinion before making decisions. The class representative can advocate: (1) presentation and exploration of new issues in council meeting; (2) discussion of issues by each class group, under the guidance of its own representative; and (3) final action by the council, on the basis of the reactions of the total student body.

Once the student council has set up a policy, every class has the responsibility for carrying it out. Even though the class members disagree with it, they must respect the policy until such time as they, working through their representatives, can get the total student council to change it. When the class disagrees with the council, they may organize a campaign to change the opinion of the total student body so that when the representatives go to the next council meeting, the majority will vote in favor of the change.

All the procedures we have been discussing are really techniques of democratic citizenship. Encouraging students to initiate policies and to assume the responsibility of carrying them out is one of the best devices at our disposal to familiarize them with the duties of responsible citizens in a democratic society. And, fortunately, we all have a chance to help in this area of education—whether we teach mathematics, science, or music.

How Do We Work with the Administration?

The administration is a part of the classroom learning situation. Its attitude toward pupils and teachers helps to determine the emotional tone of the school. Unless channels of communication are open between the pupils and the administration, the full potential of the administrators will not be used in improving the learning situation, and school policy will not receive the benefit of pupil thought during its formation.

Unless we ourselves have close communication with the administration, we cannot expect the pupils in our class to have

it. Too frequently, principal-teacher conversations deal only with complaints, rules, punishments, and records. We need, through procedures such as workshops, conferences, and in-service study, to talk together as a total staff, including administrators, about the program, and to seek agreement on needed improvements. In such situations, we can help by centering attention on what is good for pupils. Such a focus reduces the importance of selfish considerations and highlights possible ways of making the learning situation more efficient. *What* is right becomes much more important than *who* is right.

We promote better teaching-learning situations if, in faculty planning, we encourage the administration to adopt a permissive attitude toward experimentation. An atmosphere in which each teacher is encouraged to improve his instructional practices promotes more effective application of the evaluative process and stimulates the sharing of results.

We can do a great deal to help pupils establish friendly relations with the administration if we refrain from using the administration as a threat, or picturing it as a restrictive force that keeps us from doing what we want to do. Such an attitude prevents administrators from contributing to the class and limits the pupil's freedom to use the total facilities of the school in securing the most educative experiences.

We help pupils by regarding administrators as resource persons who are available when assistance is needed and by encouraging the class to do the same. We may invite the principal to sit in as a member of the group during a planning session, for example. As he contributes suggestions on ways in which students can use the school facilities more effectively in carrying out their activities, they begin to understand and appreciate his function.

Once the students have recognized the value of an administrator's potential contribution, they will want to invite him back frequently. They will have special times when they want the counsel of the administrator. Moreover, when he is con-

sidered a friend, they will want him to see the results of their efforts.

> For example, in a Kentucky high school the principal and supervisor were asked to assist in photographing and recording a class project. The cooperation essential in the activity improved the working relationship between the teacher and the administration and deepened the appreciation of the pupils for the principal and supervisor to the point where these men are continually besieged by pupil requests to return for a visit.

The principal is in a position to offer us valuable assistance in our work with parents. If we are new to the community, he can introduce us to them. And he can give us confidence by being with us in our meetings with parents when we need him.

How Do We Work with Parents?

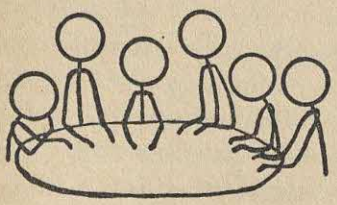
The school and the home must work together if the student is to derive the maximum benefit from his educational experience. If learning is to be efficient, channels of communication must be maintained through which teachers and parents can plan together. That means that we will want the parents to visit the classroom, to have first-hand experience with the atmosphere in which their children live day by day, and to plan the program together.

But many children are embarrassed when their parents come to school. After they reach the third or fourth grade in some schools, they begin to feel that such visits degrade them in the eyes of their classmates. They feel that parental visits take away from their sense of independence and extend their babyhood unnecessarily. In many neighborhoods, a visit by a parent means that the child is in trouble and that the parent has been called on the carpet or has been asked to help out in disciplining the child. Naturally, such attitudes militate against our efforts to include parents in program planning.

We can help pupils to regard parental participation more favorably by encouraging them to arrange social activities for

their parents—parties or receptions, or programs followed by refreshments. Pupils can feel that they are entertaining their parents on a social level. They need not feel that the parents are coming to the school to check on them. Rather, they will welcome a situation in which they can deal with their parents more as equals, in which they play hosts to their guests. Or we can set aside portions of the class time to discuss with students their relationship with their parents. As soon as pupils feel that they can trust us, they will begin to bring out into the open some of the problems that they are facing in their relationships at home. If opportunities are provided for these questions to be considered sincerely and honestly and with complete frankness, we can discuss with students ways of living and working with their parents to the mutual benefit of all. And then the next natural step is for pupils to plan with us how they can use their parents as resource people to help carry on the school work.

Some teachers of older children have found it helpful to invite certain parents who speak fluently and who feel at ease to come to the class to discuss with children their problems as parents. If children can see the parents of some of their peers sitting down and talking with them frankly and openly about problems that arise in the home, they will feel freer to invite other parents, who may be less articulate or less at ease with their children, to become a part of the discussion group.



One of the easiest ways of bringing parents into the classroom situation is to have them work with the class in the improvement of the room and equipment. Most classrooms lack certain pieces of equipment that would greatly facilitate the work of the group. If parents can be brought in to work jointly with youngsters in preparing such materials and equipment, a natural, cooperative work situation develops between

children and parents which leads directly to the joint planning of more and more class activities. In the lower grades, particularly, parents are helpful in the planning and carrying out of trips and parties. Once the children begin to find that parents can be a natural part of the school environment, even the more reticent pupils will feel less hesitancy in having their parents come to the school.

In some schools, where there is no full-time librarian, parents organize voluntarily to supply library service at all times. As various parents take their turn in serving as librarian or in working with teachers who are coordinating the library service, the children become accustomed to having their parents in the school situation. The same situation exists in helping with the cafeteria or with traffic problems.

As we take these steps, we aid children to regard their parents as natural members of the work group whose presence in the school is normal, and in no way extraordinary.

Having many different adults in the school contributes to the richness of the learning situation. Since each pupil interacts with different stimuli, we can insure a significant experience for more students by increasing the number of contacts with persons of different ages, interests, talents, and responsibilities.

Planning together effectively necessitates parent-teacher conferences—either group conferences or person-to-person talks.

Under the group plan, some schools have initiated programs in which the teacher meets with the parents of his homeroom group once a month. These meetings occur either in the school or in the home of one of the parents, and the time is devoted to discussing the class program, the actual work, and any questions the parents may have about it. Usually the first meetings are devoted to outlining the plan of work, the purposes behind the plan, and the status of the class as it begins the program. Later sessions deal with progress reports of steps that have been taken, successes and failures that have occurred, and any changes that have been made. As the year continues, the ses-

sions are more frequently devoted to questions asked by the parents or to topics that are of major interest to a particular group of parents.

Ideally, these meetings should be held on different nights of the week. So many of the parents have social responsibilities on certain nights of the week that some will not be able to attend during the year unless we vary the night from meeting to meeting. Better attendance and more effective meetings result if refreshments are available and if parents are able to smoke. Some teachers have found that the meetings are more successful if one parent serves as chairman while the teacher serves only as a resource person and consultant.

When parents and teachers meet together frequently to discuss the work of the class, it is very easy to bring into the sessions class committees or even the total class group to talk with their parents about the various activities in which they are engaging or the various projects that they have completed. Then, as these projects are discussed and evaluated, we can plan, together with parents and pupils, the steps the class will take next.

Just as important as group conferences are person-to-person conferences with parents.

> Soon after he had arrived at a new school, one teacher found that there were two brothers in his class who had been major discipline problems in the school. When he went to visit their home, he was met at the door by a hostile mother who demanded that he tell her what he wanted her to do and get it over quickly because she was busy. The teacher countered with, "I'm not here to tell you anything. I want advice. You know your boys better than anyone else. Won't you tell me how I can be of most help to them?" The mother's attitude changed instantly. She said, "You are the first teacher who has come to see me in the five years my boys have been in school who has not told me what to do." And then she began to discuss her concern for the boys and the kind of help she needed. After that conference the parents worked with the

teacher throughout the year and the boys' behavior in school improved.

Naturally, every parent regards his child as a very special and very wonderful person. He should! Any remark of ours that belittles or disparages the child insults the parent. Any advice that is not requested discredits the parents' best efforts in rearing their child.

Too frequently, teacher-parent conferences have been limited to a discussion of the youngsters' difficulties in school. As a result, many parents come to a conference fully expecting their youngster to be criticized or expecting to be asked to improve the behavior of the child in school. Such an attitude obviously calls for careful procedure on our part.

At the beginning of the conference, we try to put the parent at ease. It helps if we remember that many parents have had unpleasant experiences with teachers all their lives. We avoid formality. We do not keep the parent sitting on a hard chair in front of the desk while we sit on a comfortable swivel chair. We do not talk in technical language, attempting to impress him with our learning. We do not talk down to him. We do not rush the conference. It cannot be hurried. Neither should other parents be able to listen while they sit and wait their turn. In fact, any appearance of a routine, assembly-line type of interview will impair the possibilities of success.

It is better if we have our first conference early in the year, before any student has run into trouble. By this procedure we can establish a working basis with parents built on the idea of cooperative planning.

At the first conference our focus may be on the progress we and the parent hope the pupil will make during the year and the sharing of experiences that will help us both to understand the child. We try, if necessary, to increase the parent's concern with ways in which both of us, working together, can help the child in his total growth, attitudes, self-direction, and social skills, as well as in his academic achievement. At later con-

ferences, it may be well to let the parent take the initiative in the discussion, particularly if the parent has any dissatisfaction with the youngster's progress. Opportunity should be provided for the parent to make suggestions for improvement. Our contribution can be in answering questions, sharing our concerns, and getting the parent's reaction to plans that we think will succeed.

The emphasis during the whole interview should be on thinking with the parent rather than on attempting to sell him on any given procedure. If we are willing to think with the parent, he will accept us without feeling that pressure is being exerted on him. If, on the other hand, he feels that we are holding the interview to get him to do what we want done, without consideration for home conditions or for his own desires, the interview will be doomed to failure. And we will find that it becomes increasingly difficult even to get parents to talk with us as the year progresses.

We may choose to hold our interviews in the home, rather than at the school. But in no sense should home visits be inspections. If the parent feels that we are coming in a critical, inspectorial frame of mind, the home visit will be defeated before it starts. The parent will resent us, and we will gain little helpful insight into the personality of the boy or girl involved. The first few minutes of a home visit, as in any interview, are used to develop an acquaintanceship with the parent which will serve as a foundation for parent-teacher planning. It is a time for getting to know each other as people. As the home visit progresses, the center of emphasis usually shifts to a discussion of the child, who is, after all, the major concern of both the parent and us. Our task is to let the parent know that we are not there to tell him what to do for his child, but rather to discover ways in which we can be of more help to him.

Home visits are easier in the elementary school, because the child is usually under the care of only one teacher. But in the high school, home visits are much more difficult, because each child has daily contacts with four or five teachers, and it is not

easy to assign major responsibility for the child to any one of them. It is impossible for each high-school teacher to visit the homes of all of the 200 youngsters whom they teach in a given year. And even if it were possible, parents would resent having five or six teachers for each of their children coming for home visits. But some high schools have faced this problem realistically and effectively. Home visits for a given pupil have been made the responsibility of a single teacher who shares whatever information, ideas, and suggestions that he gains with the other teachers who work with the child.

Close association with parents is rewarding if we look upon them as partners in planning; it is a bore if we regard ourselves as superior intellects trying to enlighten the uneducated.

How Do We Work with the Community?

Education is a total community process. Youngsters learn from their parents, from adults outside their parental group, from other youngsters, from community social activities, from community institutions, and from mass media of communication. They live in a community; they absorb its beliefs and patterns of behavior. If the classroom is to be an effective learning situation, we are forced to work with all the educative forces in the community. We cannot be satisfied with establishing and maintaining relationships with the group within the school alone. Our task includes establishing working relationships with the out-of-school forces that influence the child's development. One phase of the job is to keep informed about the specific forces that affect children's living and thinking.

What Educative Forces Exist in the Community?

Radio is such a force. Youngsters hear singing commercials; they learn trade names; they develop an understanding of comedy; they learn the news of the day and come to depend upon radio newscasts as an authoritative source of information about happenings in the world; they learn about sport events; and to a lesser extent they hear the important speeches made by

statesmen and politicians. For some pupils, radio is also a source of information about religion.

Similar learnings are coming to youngsters today through television. In fact, the impact of television, if we can judge by the few studies that have been made, is even stronger than that of radio. Boys and girls are spending more time in front of the television set than they did listening to the radio. School work, school activities, and homework receive less attention from boys and girls in communities in which television has exercised its full force. No teacher can ignore the learning that children are getting from television.

And movies play an important role in providing stereotypes and generalizations. Boys and girls gain many of their understandings about Indians, Mexicans, Chinese, and other racial and national groups from the stereotypes provided by the movies. They acquire many of the social cues by which they judge community situations from the same source. They gain some impression of what constitutes false and real values in adult situations. If we pretend that this influence does not affect the child, we are ignoring a very potent source of education.

Newspapers educate boys and girls. If the newspapers are biased, if they present distorted facts, the attitudes that boys and girls develop are also biased and distorted. In some communities in America there is only one newspaper or one radio station, which in some cases does not always attempt to give an objective analysis of the news. Consequently, whole generations have grown up with little opportunity to contrast various viewpoints and to draw their own conclusions on major social issues. We can expect that most of the boys and girls in such communities will be handicapped by this limited treatment of significant trends outside the community.

In any community, we need to be aware of how limited or how rich have been the facilities of mass communication in bringing to the people of the community an honest, objective analysis of the problems being decided in our society.

The civic groups of the community, through the type of

activity they choose to promote, exert a strong influence on boys' and girls' out-of-school learning. In some communities, major emphasis is placed on sports activities. In others, civic groups promote dramatic organizations, music societies, libraries, and other activities which stress the more cultural aspects of living. These varying emphases are reflected in the learning of the children. If boys and girls see adults concerned about the improvement of living for all, they draw certain conclusions on what values are important. If, on the other hand, the adults of the community are concerned about a very restricted phase of living, the children draw altogether different conclusions.

The labor forces of the community also provide a part of the background which boys and girls bring to their school experiences. In some communities there is a strong labor bias. In others, boys and girls have no opportunity to come in contact with labor leaders or with persons who represent the labor viewpoint. In either case, they bring to school attitudes and interpretations which we will need to help them examine if they are to attain proper perspective.

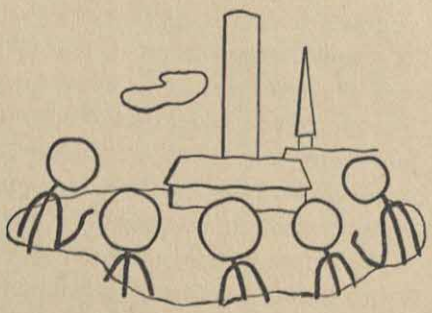
The churches are a strong educative force in many communities. In some, the church actually dictates the type of recreation that will be carried on. In others, however, it has little effect on day-to-day living. Where there are many churches, reflecting a wide range of denominational beliefs, a divergence in viewpoint may develop among the boys and girls as to what constitutes the most acceptable type of religion. This divergence may, in some cases, lead to violent prejudices or even to actual conflict.

Housing, law enforcement, local politics, sanitation, morals, recreation, natural resources, and economic structure are all potent in determining what children of the community will be like. If the quality of community living is low, our task will be much more difficult but much more essential. We can see possible methods if we remember that each community exists within larger communities and rich educational experiences are

possible in contrasting the standards of overlapping communities. For example, a community with strong anti-Mexican prejudice can contrast its attitude with our national emphasis on Inter-American understanding.

All these forces are a part of the educational environment. They all have a share in creating the attitudes that boys and girls bring to the classroom. And they continue to exercise their influence all the time the children are with us. One of our jobs is to work with boys and girls so that they will develop a critical awareness of these community resources, and will use them to the best advantage in increasing their insight and understanding, and their skill in working within the community.

As effective teachers, we bring into the classroom as much of community living as we can. We can have boys and girls discuss the experiences they have in the community, the programs going on in their churches, the Community Chest Drive, the American Legion parade, the new real estate development,



garbage collection and sanitation, the fire department, and police operation. The list is endless. Boys and girls have many rich experiences every day which they can share with one another. Studying and analyzing community papers, pictures of the town, and publications of the local Chamber of Commerce or of other local organizations can also be effective. The only way we can really prevent pupils from bringing their community life into the classroom is to insist that they stick to the

printed word rather than use the real experiences that they have every day as the basis of educational activity in the classroom.

How Shall We Use Films?

Films are a way of bringing the more distant community to the school. As boys and girls have an opportunity to visit other towns and communities by means of films, they gain an understanding of the industrial, economic, and social operation of our society. All these factors are important in helping students become intelligent citizens of the world community in which they live.

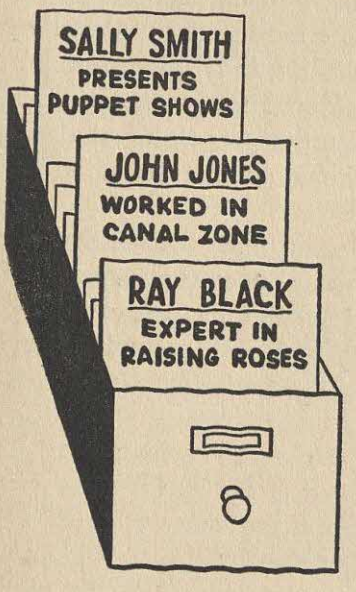
There are certain difficulties in using films, however. Two factors—a properly darkened room, and operators capable of handling the machine—can be eliminated by procuring the new screens that can be used in daylight, and by having some of the students learn how to operate the projector. A more difficult problem is scheduling films to fit in with the activities going on in the regular class work. Unless the school owns its own film, it is sometimes necessary to order as far as a year ahead to be sure of getting the film at the time we think we will want it. When we order supplies this far ahead, we establish a framework within which we must work and the class must study. The class has no part in the planning. There seems to be no readymade answer to this problem. We are forced to decide which is more valuable—providing the experiences that films can bring or maintaining a continuous flow of experiences that have been planned with the pupils.

One way of working where there is fixed schedule of films is to announce the schedule to the boys and girls as soon as we start to work and plan with them, so that they can build experiences around those films which they deem important enough to use. On occasion, the administration or some other group may decide that a certain film should be shown to our class simply because the film happens to be in the building. But we should avoid interrupting class activities for the show-

ing unless the film promises to contribute significantly to the group's purposes.

How Shall We Use Resource People?

During every school year, many opportunities arise for inviting resource people from the community to share their experiences with the boys and girls in the school.



In some school systems, a card file of resource people in the community has been developed. Sometimes this file is prepared by the local P.T.A. or other parent groups. Or teachers and students, working together, may develop their own file. Undoubtedly, our list of resource people will begin with the parents of the boys and girls in the classroom. Since they have what might be called a vested interest in their children's education, we should not hesitate to call upon them to share their knowledge and experiences with the group.

Shall We Participate in Community Projects?

Cooperation on community projects is another way of combining school and community learning. Many boys and girls have gained valuable educational experiences by participating in community drives, by sitting in on the planning of community projects, or by joining with other child or youth groups in planning and carrying on some program or celebration.

A still higher level of community participation, which enables boys and girls to develop valuable democratic skills, is that of community improvement projects. In a New York

school, students undertook a "block beautiful" campaign. In a Colorado school, youngsters studied the garbage collection service and carried through a petition for improvement. In an Alabama school, classes undertook landscaping and beautification for their entire community. Another class in an Alabama school undertook a terracing project for the farmlands of the community. Such activities give boys and girls a sense of contributing to the improvement of the community in which they live, a feeling that they have an important contribution to make.

Every citizen in the community, including students, has a responsibility for improving living in the community. The things that students should do are determined by the needs they feel to be vital in their community. The same activities are not appropriate in all communities. A class must determine for itself what the community needs to make it a better place in which to live.

What Criteria Shall We Apply?

Working with a class on such a project involves a willingness to help and an awareness of the educational implications and possibilities of the situation. It also requires a knowledge of community organization and skill in working with the adults of the community. A public relations or a publicity program may have to be set up to inform the parents and community about the educational values involved.

The class members themselves will need to have criteria by which they can judge the relative importance of such activities, so that they can determine which projects fall within the province of the educational program conducted by the school. Certainly they will not want to repeat the same project over and over. For example, one clean-up campaign might be a valuable educational experience. But if the students were to engage in a series of drives over a period of time, they would probably cease to derive much educational value from the successive experiences.

Of course, boys and girls should not be exploited by the community to carry on routine functions as a part of the school program. Basically, any activity in which boys and girls engage should be judged in terms of the contribution that it is making to their immediate growth, rather than in terms of the continuing advantages it contributes to the community living of adults.

What Shall We Do About the World Community?

The community does not stop a few miles from the school building. Increased speed in transportation and communication is making the world smaller and smaller, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that the world is really one community. What affects one group affects the others as well. Many classroom activities enable boys and girls to contribute directly to the improvement of the world community. Some classes are carrying on correspondence with classes in Europe. Others are sending food and clothes to needy boys and girls in other parts of the world. Still others are undertaking projects to help their communities gain a clearer understanding of their place in the world and to improve their relationships with the communities of other countries.

Many classes are asking themselves these questions: Are we completely informed about the United Nations? Are the members of our community doing as much as they can to help the United Nations? Would it be helpful for us to get more information about the United Nations and make it available to our class, our school, and our community? Are we doing enough to help other people become informed of democracy and its importance in America? Are we doing our part in improving human relations in our own community and in other parts of the world as well?

How Do We Report to the Community?

An understanding that education is a total community operation, requiring the full use of community resources, makes

us realize that pupils must learn to live not only with the other members of the school but with the adult members of the community as well. Certain relationships must be established between the class group and community groups to insure cooperative planning and to guarantee full flow of information in both directions.

Some schools have formed community advisory committees composed of representatives of important groups in the community. Other schools have secured representation on community coordinating councils. We can encourage our fellow faculty members to join community organizations or to take the leadership in initiating them if they do not already exist. Even if we must work alone, we can develop adult advisory groups for projects undertaken by our class. At the very least, we can take steps to inform the community of the program.

Under any procedure adopted, the purpose is to improve community living for pupils of the age group with which the school is concerned. The total community educates the child.

Our best representatives in the community are the students themselves. If they are happy, if they know what they are doing and why they are doing it, if they are convinced of the importance of their work because they have had a part in planning it, they are evidence to the community of the quality of the educational program.

The culminating activities of class projects are another way of reporting to the community.

> In a Long Island elementary school, a fourth-grade class centered its attention for two months on a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Their art experience was preparation of backdrops, scenery, and costumes. Their English, oral and written, was the revision of the operetta to make it suitable for fourth-graders. Their musical experience was in learning the Gilbert

and Sullivan songs and selecting the persons to sing the various roles. This two-month project was climaxed by a presentation of the operetta for the parents of the class members, followed by a performance for everyone from the community who wished to come. It was a learning experience—not a show. In addition to being a highlight of their elementary school career for the youngsters, it was a selling point for the school. It gave many adults in the community who did not understand the type of program that was being developed an opportunity to see what the boys and girls did.

The columns of the local newspaper constitute another channel of communication in smaller communities. Many times items in such columns are limited to the social activities of the school or to sports and intra-mural programs. One reason for this restricted coverage is that teachers and classes do not supply the columnists with information about new and different things that are occurring in the classes. If we will take the time to work out with youngsters reports of our activities, we can make the local newspapers much more effective in keeping the members of the community informed on the total program of the school.

A fairly common method of reporting to the community is through the use of the radio programs over the local stations. With the development of the tape recorder and the techniques of recording programs, it is now possible for classes to develop scripts of their own activities, to produce them, and to revise the productions until they get a finished product that they want to share with members of the community.

A still more common way of letting the community know what is going on in the school is to invite parents and taxpayers to an "open house" program. Each class group can arrange exhibits of the type of work that they are carrying on. These exhibits, if conceived of as opportunities for really sharing what is going on in the classroom, can be used to summarize the progress that has been made and to serve as a basis for further planning. If plans of work and projects in various

stages of development are included, the community can see how work is done and how self-direction is developed. Our preparation for such events should be a summarizing, evaluating phase of the regular work rather than time out of the program.

Any relationship with the community is a part of a continuing process. If we judge our participation in each situation by whether or not it increases the chances that the next contacts will be even more beneficial in assisting pupils to assume a more mature role in the community, we are making possible richer educational experiences for pupils.

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS

1. Become acquainted with present practice in the school.
2. Encourage the administrator to foster cooperative planning in the staff.
3. Seek agreement in staff on policies which affect our instructional practice.
4. Plan exchange of resources with other teachers.
5. Think through with our class the contribution it can make to the school.
6. Investigate with pupils various services they might render to the school.
7. Encourage students to share their projects with other classes.
8. Promote inter-room social activities.
9. Share resource materials and persons.
10. Help the class establish channels of communication with the student council.
11. Encourage the class to make recommendations to student government.
12. Help pupils establish friendly relations with the administration.
13. Use the administrator as a resource person.
14. Use meetings with parents to reach agreement concerning types of pupil growth desired.

15. Encourage pupils to hold social meeting for parents.

16. Invite parents to help with the work of the class, serve as resource persons, or aid in improving class equipment.

17. Make portions of class time available to discuss family relations.

18. Hold parent conferences before difficulties with pupils arise.

19. Think with parents instead of trying to sell them on our answer.

20. Bring information about the community into the class work.

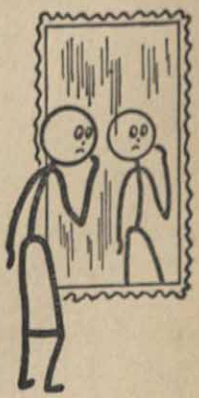
21. Use community members as resource people in class.

22. Supply information to the community about the work of the class.

23. Seek projects through which pupils can work for community improvement.

24. Participate in community groups that are working for improved programs for children and youth.

Teaching Is Skill in Self-Improvement



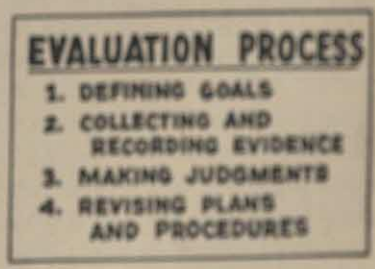
Chapter 14

How Do We Improve Our Teaching?

None of us teaches as well as he would like to. In varying degrees, we all fail to achieve our dream of successful teaching because of ineffective procedures, poverty of ideas, lack of maturity, or limited understanding of the process of change. This final chapter will be an attempt to explore ways of improving our teaching through continued growth in these areas.

How Do We Evaluate Our Teaching?

The evaluation process—defining our goals, collecting evidence, recording the evidence, making judgments, revising procedures—is as helpful in promoting self-improvement for teachers as it is for pupils.



As a result of our study of human growth, democracy, and the community in which we teach, most of us are fairly clear about the goals we are trying to achieve through the experiences we help pupils have in those areas in which we are competent guides. Moreover, through effective use of pupil-teacher planning, we can also secure a definition of the purposes of pupils, and through parent-teacher conferences, we can determine the results that parents desire.

These additional sources supplement and condition our own purposes as we form the criteria by which we evaluate our teaching.

Our next step in evaluating ourselves is collecting evidence that indicates how closely we have been able to approach our goals. We find such evidence in the records of pupil progress, pupil-teacher planning sessions, anonymous judgments by pupils as they leave our classes, parent reactions, and our own records.

An important element in this evidence is the actual degree of pupil progress. What was the status of pupils as they began to work with us? To what point have they progressed? Test scores and samples of pupil work provide evidence of our success in stimulating pupil growth. Marks, as customarily given, and final scores do not. *Evidence of successful teaching lies in the amount of progress pupils make, not in their final achievement.*

Even progress must be considered in terms of the limitations of the pupils and the situation. A highly intelligent class may make much progress in spite of poor teaching; a class with less intelligence may make little progress with the most effective teaching.

In any case, the evidence about pupil progress is basic. Unless pupils are growing in the desired directions, our ways of working with them are ineffective.

Pupil-teacher planning provides one of the best means of collecting evidence on how to improve our methods. As students plan with us, they indicate their approval of certain work procedures and suggest improvements on others. Our main concern in a pupil-teacher planning session should be whether or not our actions promote the free exchange of opinions. If our present procedures are the kind that enable students to speak freely, we can be sure that we are obtaining significant evidence in the planning situation. If, however, we find that students are reticent and hesitant about saying what they think, we need the help of our principal, or supervisor, or an-

other teacher in analyzing our habits to see how we can eliminate certain of our mannerisms or change our way of participating in a group so that students will feel more free to contribute their opinions and ideas.

We can usually secure a very candid appraisal of our group procedures by asking each member of a departing class to prepare anonymously a list of suggestions on ways in which we might improve. The frequent recurrence of certain items in these lists gives us a clear indication of areas in which we should seek advice and counsel from another teacher or a consultant. Also, the comments made by a single student may be so pertinent that we will want to explore fully his analysis of our procedures.

Parent reactions to the success of their children provide added evidence. If children are satisfied with their experiences with us, the parents know it and are inclined to believe that the teaching is good. If, in addition, they find their children attaining desirable types of growth, they will be sure of the quality of the teaching. On the other hand, if the parents are disappointed, unhappy, or dissatisfied, we have evidence that either our ways of communicating with them or our teaching methods themselves are in need of improvement.

Observations made by our principal or supervisor provide valuable evidence in our evaluation of our teaching. They see our work from a different angle. They can be more objective and furnish us with comparisons which are really additional data to use in making judgments. From them, we can secure information about the growth of similar pupils in other classes. We can also have them collect evidence by serving as impartial observers to record working sessions of our group. Their help in evaluation is especially important if the total staff has taken the time to agree on the purposes it is striving to attain.

Some teachers help one another collect evidence by devising in faculty groups a self-evaluation check list which each teacher may use to record evidence about himself from time to time. It is helpful in such a check list—or in any self-evaluation

device, for that matter—to provide space for recording evidence before judgments are recorded. For example:

Do I accept all pupils?
Evidence

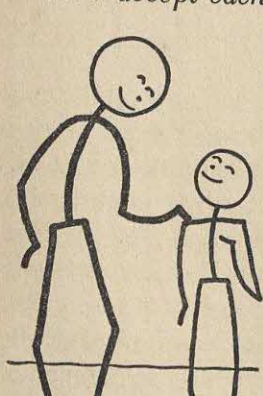
	Yes				No
Judgment	1	2	3	4	5

Even if we use a check list worked out by all the members of the faculty, we will also want to develop an individual check list which includes the values that we ourselves deem most important. Frequent comparison of the points on our personal list with our actual performance will provide us with abundant evidence of whether or not we are living up to what we believe.

On the basis of the concept of teaching that has been advanced in this book, the following personal check list is appropriate:

Human Relations

Do I accept each child as I work with the class?



Do I find it easy to work with children from underprivileged homes, from homes with moral standards different from my own, from homes of different races or religions, and from homes with opposing political viewpoints? Am I willing to counsel with children who are dirty, who are aggressive, who are below average in intelligence, or who resent me because I am a teacher? Acceptance of each child means that we are willing to spend as much time with the least

attractive child in our room and be as helpful to him as we are with the most attractive child.

Do I help all pupils to feel that they belong?

A second-grader went into a new school on the first day of the semester. Since he anticipated making new friends, he entered his classroom with a big smile on his face. His teacher, who remained seated at the desk, glanced up and said, "Find a seat." All his enthusiasm gone, Bill, feeling very much alone in a strange school, turned to the nearest desk. Helping each child feel that he belongs means offering a smile, a word of welcome, a demonstration that he is wanted, to each child who enters our group. Of course, this may be hard when we have thirty-five or more pupils, but it is just as important in large groups as it is in small.

Another child entered a first-grade class in which each section had thirty-eight pupils. When the principal took him to the section that had been selected for him, the teacher glanced quickly at the principal with a challenge in her eye which said, "What, another one!" The pupil, a very sensitive youngster, interpreted the glance correctly, and although the teacher held out her hand and gave him a big smile, saying, "We are glad to have you, Tom," he began to cry. Helping youngsters feel that they belong is not accomplished just through words. We show it through our manner and through the extent to which we include pupils in the things that we do.

Do I let pupils know I have confidence in them?

Although many youngsters come to our class with a great deal of self-confidence, others, as a result of many unsuccessful experiences in school, are uncertain of themselves and of their ability to be successful. As we begin to work with a youngster, we need to look for the things that he does well, to praise him for them, and to demonstrate our belief that he can be successful in his new undertakings. Demonstrations of confidence include a friendly manner, a pat on the shoulder, a willingness

to turn a task over to the pupil without minute supervision, and a recognition of the good qualities in any piece of finished work. From time to time we need to ask ourselves, "Are there any pupils in class in whom I have not found a single competency?"

Do I make each child feel he has a contribution to make?

This question is closely related to the previous one. In addition to letting a youngster know that we have confidence in him, we need to analyze with him his strengths and his abilities to see what special contribution he can make to the group. His contribution may be simply bringing some magazines from home, telling of an experience he has had during the past year, sharing a joke that he likes, caring for the class pets, or reading to the class. But our central concern will be in discovering some special contribution that each pupil can make.

This quality on our part is more important for the less successful pupils than for the more adequate ones. The more intelligent pupils will usually make their own contribution without assistance from us.

Do I let pupils know that I like them?

When we are fearful that pupils will take advantage of our friendliness, we are demonstrating a feeling of insecurity about our ability to deal with social situations that may arise. In our work with children we need to let them know that we like them and want them to succeed. Human beings thrive and grow in an emotional climate of affection and acceptance. Smiles, warm greetings, and expressions of approval and liking are all important qualities of a successful classroom. They do much to enhance the learning situation.

We do not, of course, behave on the same level as youngsters in the class. We are not chums with students in the sense that peers are bosom companions. Because of our greater maturity, we must constantly make judgments on whether or not our way of working with pupils can be improved. When we

find that our manifestations of affection and approval lead certain pupils to take advantage of the situation, we withdraw some of them. We evaluate our procedure on the basis of whether or not it is improving the quality of the learning situation for the pupil involved.

Do I help pupils accept one another?

We can make a major contribution by helping youngsters understand and accept one another. We can encourage them to look upon their class as a group whose purpose is to help each individual grow. We raise questions such as: What can we do to make Sally feel at home? How can we help Andy become more effective in group discussions? What suggestions do we have for helping Sam improve his study procedures? Helping pupils accept one another also means sitting down with individual students and talking with them about their relationships with other members of the group—how they can become more acceptable to the group.

Do I give praise frequently?

A word of praise pays dividends out of all proportion to the effort involved. All of us crave approval and sincere praise of recognition for the contribution that we make. To promote efficient learning, we strive for the kind of class relationship in which each member is generous with his praise for other members of the group.

Do I make myself available when pupils want to see me?

If we are going to provide the counsel and guidance that will help individuals grow in solving their personal problems, we take time to sit down and talk with them when they want us to. If we always appear to be very busy or rush away from school at the close of the day, pupils will sense that we do not want to be bothered with them. And if we continually glance at our watch when we do talk with them, they will know that our attention is not on them and that our concern is not with their problem.

Do I allow pupils to express their feelings?

We can pretend that any situation is what it appears to be on the surface, but our pretense does not make it true. Feelings influence the effectiveness of every learning situation, whether or not pupils have the opportunity to reveal them. Our only hope of improving the "feeling tone" of the classroom is to make it possible for youngsters to say what they feel. This means that we won't be shocked, become angry or hurt, fight back, or cut short an expression of feelings that we do not like. When a youngster says, "I don't like you," or "I hate you," we accept those expressions merely as guiding evidence. Rather than trying to suppress such outbursts, we recognize them as opportunities for rewarding analysis of values.

Do I avoid allowing my feelings to be hurt?

As the most mature member of the group, we have the responsibility for helping the others become more mature. We achieve this purpose by constantly keeping in mind the question, "How can I use this situation to help this pupil grow?" Such an attitude prevents us from ever reacting on an angry, emotional basis to children's behavior. Instead, we look upon all behavior as evidence that will guide us in planning for their continued growth. If our emotions are so near the surface that we interpret the overt behavior of pupils as personal attacks, there will be little prospect of our helping them to grow.

Do I admit a mistake when results show I was wrong?

Mistakes cannot be covered up by persons in a position of leadership. Admitting mistakes does not lessen our prestige. Instead, it permits others to work with us without feeling that we will try to cover up our mistakes by blaming them. In the process of learning, pupils will make mistakes. And in the process of teaching, we will make mistakes too. We can help young-

sters understand the learning process by demonstrating to them that we use our mistakes to improve our procedure.

Do I avoid trying to impress pupils with my knowledge and competence?

If we feel that we must try to impress pupils, we are suffering from a sense of personal inadequacy. Pupils learn to respect us because of what we are, not because of what we try to convince them we are. It is impossible for any of us to maintain a false front with thirty pupils for a whole year. The only person who is fooled is the one who is trying to fool the others.

Do I have an adequate system for recording agreements and promises?

When we work with thirty or more pupils each day, we have so many contacts that it is impossible for us to remember them all without keeping orderly records. Important among these records is a statement of our commitments and promises. If we fail to live up to the agreements that we have made, pupils will lose faith in us.

Do I show as much courtesy as I expect?

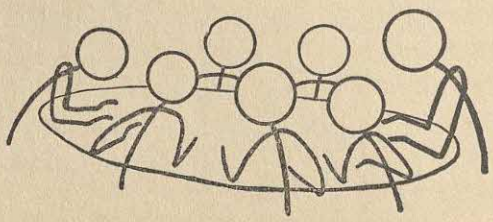
We teach as much by example as we do by words. If we want our pupils to be courteous, we demonstrate the qualities which we hope they will acquire. This means that we do not shout at people, or take advantage of them, or insist on special privileges, or depart from the code of etiquette established by the group. We will be as willing to say "Will you" and "Please" to a student as we want him to be in talking with us.

Group Process

Do I help pupils get acquainted?

If we hope to create a classroom atmosphere in which pupils will exchange experiences and ideas freely, we help them take

the initial steps in getting to know one another. Too many teachers feel that helping students get acquainted is a waste of class time. Actually, it is part of the process by which the class really begins to function. It is the first step in helping a class become a group.



Do I encourage students to work together?

We know that boys and girls are social beings who like to work and play with other people. If we want to make the classroom environment pleasant, we encourage pupils to work together rather than penalize them for communicating with one another. By encouraging cooperation, we increase the motivation to do work and we stimulate development of the skills necessary for working with other people.

Do I share authority with group members?

Either we can tell students that it is *our* class and that they are there to do *our* bidding, or we can let them know that we are willing to plan with them. If planning together is to have any meaning, we are willing to share the decision-making. But if the final decision is always ours, students feel that pupil-teacher planning is a guessing game in which they try to discover what we want. Under such circumstances, planning becomes a farce and students soon refuse to take it seriously.

Do I bring all students into the planning?

In order to make use of existing motivation, we provide opportunities for students to state their purposes. Unless all students are brought into the planning, we impair motivation

and limit the number of people who are really concerned about what happens in the class. Too frequently, we bring the most intelligent students into the thinking and planning and exclude the ones who do not demonstrate leadership. Too frequently, we raise a question about what should be done and then accept the first suggestion that one of the class leaders makes, without referring it to the total group for a decision. Such a method denies the total class an opportunity to be self-directing just as much as insisting that all students do what we plan for them to do.

Do I succeed in getting all students to assume responsibility?

Our answer to this question depends largely on our answer to the preceding one. People assume responsibility for the success of plans that they have made. When people share, they care. When we have concurred in a decision, our judgment is at stake and we back it. But when the decision has been someone else's, we have no stake in the success or failure of its implementation.

Do I help the group form a code of behavior?

Every group has to abide by some rules of behavior. If we do not help the group with which we work to formulate its own code, pupils will lack the security of knowing what is acceptable. We force ourselves into the position of having to tell them how they may behave.

Do I consult the group about an action before I take it?

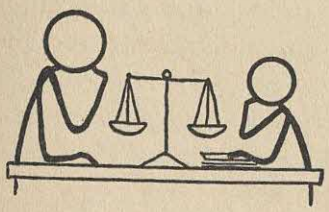
To encourage students to assume responsibility to the group, we must do the same. If we violate group procedure ourselves, we do not teach class members to respect group decisions. When we find ourselves faced by a decision on which no group policy has been established, we have an excellent opportunity to help the group grow by referring the decision to the class before we take action. If we follow this procedure ourselves, students will also follow it.

Do I work for democratic values in the group?

Our primary reason for providing schools in America is to develop democratic values and the skills necessary to implement them. Our major responsibility is to help students gain a respect for the individual, concern for the welfare of others, dependence upon the use of the intelligence of all, and realization of the need for the free flow of information. We teach these awarenesses by the way we ourselves behave within the class group.

Evaluation

Do I bring pupils into the evaluation of their work?



An essential aspect of pupil-teacher planning is pupil participation in the evaluation of their progress under the plans that they themselves have made. Unless we help them become efficient in the use of the evaluative process, we fail to help them become self-directing, effective, democratic citizens.

Do I help students determine their status as we begin to work together?

Students will not be able to ascertain their progress unless they know the point at which they began to work. If we do not take time at the outset to help youngsters determine their skills, beliefs, and knowledge, they will be unable to make subsequent valid judgments about the effectiveness of the procedures used.

Do I help the class define its goals?

Students must know precisely what types of growth they want to make before they can assemble evidence that will be pertinent in an evaluation of their work. The learning that

takes place in any activity is so great and so varied that it is hard even for adults to isolate the kind of growth they are making. How much more puzzling it is for students! Unless they decide beforehand where they are headed, their achievement is usually judged, both by themselves and by their parents, exclusively in terms of the facts acquired.

Do I arrange for all persons concerned to help establish the criteria by which a pupil's growth is judged?

Much of the concern about the effectiveness of modern education has come about because we have not bothered to sit down with parents and talk through with them the kinds of growth they want their children to make. Unless pupils, teachers, and parents come to an understanding on desired results, there exists an incipient cause of misunderstanding and dissatisfaction.

Do I help the pupils devise ways of keeping records?

Individualized instruction means helping students to keep records. Knowing what to record and how to record it is a technical process that we cannot expect students to learn without guidance. We need to take time to discuss various forms and procedures with them, and ways in which their records can be organized in terms of the types of growth they are seeking. We can also help youngsters understand the necessity for recording many and varied samples of their behavior in order to insure valid judgments on the progress they are making.

Do I record pupil behavior that I consider significant?

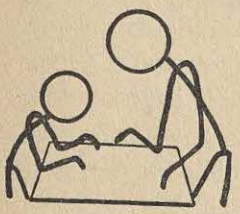
In spite of all we do, pupils will not be able to select and record all the significant evidence themselves. Neither can we, for that matter. But, because of our greater maturity and insight, certain types of behavior that are considered unimportant by students will be significant to us. If we keep a chronological record of a pupil's behavior, certain patterns of development will emerge of which he himself may not be conscious.

Do I bring pupils and parents into the interpretations of records?

By themselves, our judgments on pupil progress are invalid. We just cannot be as fully conscious of the conditions under which progress has been made, or the goals toward which it was made, as pupils and their parents are. We know only those experiences that we have actually shared. Consequently, the judgments of all persons involved are necessary in planning the next steps in the education of each student. Since records have different meanings for different people, the only way to insure that everyone will be satisfied with the progress being made is to share with them both the planning and the evaluating.

Individual Differences

Do I become acquainted with the background of each pupil?



A thin, pale seventh-grade boy fell asleep every afternoon in his health class. His teacher, disgusted with his behavior, began to talk with him for the first time. He found that the child worked as an errand boy at a grocery store every evening from five until eight, and that he was up at 3:30 every morning to deliver papers until it was time to come to school. His mother was a widow and the boy's financial contributions were essential. How successful would this teacher have been if he had threatened the boy with failure or punishment?

Do I hold individual conferences with all students?

The exceptionally able pupil, the failing pupil, or the behavior problem are those who usually receive most of our conference time. Unless we keep a record of the interviews we have with each student, the average, particularly the unattractive, student may be neglected.

Do I help each student state his goals?

Class goals are not enough to give us guidance in meeting individual differences. We will be more effective if we assist each pupil to enter in his record of his progress a clear statement of his individual goals. Many pupils need our help in identifying the things on which they should work.

Do I encourage pupils to schedule a portion of the class time for individual projects?

If the total group works together continually, pupils will have no opportunity to work on individual projects or to drill on areas in which they are weak. Having certain periods devoted to individual work is one way to guarantee an opportunity to follow individualized purposes which do not fall within the area of endeavor established by the total group.

Do I know the work each pupil is doing?

Keeping a record book is not enough. Do we look at a sample of each pupil's work each week? Do we have each pupil go over his plan of work with us and show us the progress that he has made and the deadlines he has established for himself? Knowing what each pupil is doing means at least seeing some sample of his work or talking with him about his progress and achievement each week.

Do I expect the same amount of work from all pupils?

Whether we expect it or not, we won't get it. The weaker pupils will not be able to produce at the average level and the superior pupils should do much more. If we are working in terms of individual differences, we agree with each youngster on what he is going to do and hold him to the standards that we have established together.

Do I encourage pupils to interpret their experiences in various media?

After the class has commenced some activity, such as visit-

ing a farm or attending a meeting of the city commission, the experience is analyzed and interpreted. The interpretation will be different for each member of the class and each will want to express it in his own way. Are different materials available in the room which make it possible for a pupil to express himself in ways other than with paper and pencil? Are explicit, unalterable directions given on the way reports should be prepared? Are pupils penalized who do not conform to our ideas of the way a thought should be expressed? The answers to these questions give an indication of how much we encourage children to express themselves in the media in which they are most creative.

Do I emphasize the good aspects of a pupil's work?

Criticism and disapproval hinder and restrict creativeness. Encouragement and recognition give us courage to try again and to do even better. If we want pupils to capitalize on their strengths, we help them plan and execute their greatest possible contributions. As pupils record and evaluate their behavior in terms of the criteria that they themselves have developed, they become aware of their weaknesses and inadequacies. By emphasizing their strengths, we can help them overcome their inadequacies with courage and confidence.

Do I show likes and dislikes?

We cannot like all pupils equally well—we are the product of our experiences, just as students are, and we appreciate and enjoy certain pupils more than we do others. But we are responsible to them all, and any overt evidence of preference for some will handicap us with the others. If pupils feel that we emphasize individual learning so that we can spend more time with the persons we prefer, our entire program will be jeopardized.

Do I always get the facts before making a judgment about an error?

Hasty tempers and quick judgments have no place in teaching. Counting to ten, checking and rechecking facts, and being sure to understand the pupil's point of view are devices that insure our success in helping groups and individuals to solve behavior problems.

Do I secure a wide variety of materials for my classes?

Pupils learn from different stimuli. The wider the range of stimuli in our room, the more certain we can be that all pupils will learn what we desire them to learn. We know we will have pupils with different skills and abilities. Unless we have materials of varying levels of difficulty, some students will never be challenged.

Do I encourage pupils to help one another?

We can't spread our time and energy thin enough to help all the pupils all the time. Our only hope of being able to supply continuous assistance is to have pupils help one another. We can do this by having groups work together, by asking certain students to help others, by encouraging cooperation and sharing. When we use a marking system where one student must fail because another has been successful, such as marking based on the normal curve concept, we cannot expect help of an approved nature to be given readily.

Out-of-Class Relationships

Do I try to develop cooperation among faculty members?

A highly respected teacher in a midwestern school was bemoaning the fact that many of the teachers loafed around the coffee urn in the cafeteria each afternoon after school. She said she never had time for such social activities. Even though she was deeply concerned about improving instruction, she thought only of working by herself on improving her course outlines and collecting materials. She was not aware of the leadership she could have supplied in the faculty at such

sessions. Nor did she understand why her suggestions never received consideration at faculty meetings.

Do I encourage the class to participate in school-wide activities?

Participation in the student council, in special projects, sports, or musical or dramatic activities may be the most important educative experience for some pupils. Do we insist on homework that prevents them from participating? Do we set up scholastic requirements that must be met before students are eligible for other activities? Do we feel that out-of-class activities are less valuable learning experiences than classroom activities? Are we willing to sponsor a school activity? What recognition do we give to out-of-class leadership?

Do I encourage the class to share experiences with others?

Sharing with other classes takes time. Unless we believe that sharing is an important learning experience in itself, we never find that time. How many class projects has the class shared during the past semester? Do our relationships with other faculty members encourage class sharing? Are students aware of the possibilities?

Do I hold meetings and individual conferences with parents?

Support of the program depends upon bringing parents into planning and evaluation. If we talk only with parents whose children are having difficulty or with parents who are dissatisfied with the school, we are not putting our energies to the best possible use. Our greatest opportunities come when we ask parents to take an active part in the development of educative experiences for their children.

Do I participate in community organizations?

As adults in the community learn to respect us as a person and not just as a teacher, we will enjoy more security and support. When they find that we can work effectively with adult

groups, they will be more willing to trust us with their children. Participation in community organizations permits the coordination of school work with other community activities and provides richer educative experiences for our pupils.

Do I study patterns of community life?

Our effectiveness as a teacher is related to our knowledge of community life. What are the issues confronting the community? What are the assets of the community? Have we been in homes of various economic and social levels? Are our courses affected by the problems of the community? Would we teach the same subject matter if we were in a community a hundred miles away? Has any change occurred in the community because of our work?

The evidence from all these varied sources forms the basis for judgment about our way of working with boys and girls. We will undoubtedly be satisfied with some phases of our behavior and dissatisfied with others. Our dissatisfactions indicate the areas where we should strive for improvement.

How Do We Secure Ideas To Improve Our Teaching?

Planning sessions with pupils and parents are a fruitful source of ideas for improving our teaching, but we will undoubtedly want to continue our study of professional sources as well. Research is constantly discovering better techniques for working with pupils. We enhance our chances of making wise choices as we increase our knowledge of the range of teaching procedures. Let's examine some possible ways of acquiring more information.

The principal, supervisor, or consultant provided by the school administration is one source. The primary responsibility of these people is to help teachers improve their performance. When we encounter a problem on which we need help, we should not hesitate to call on them. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness; instead, it shows the wide-awake supervisor

that we are seeking to improve our procedures and are alert to the problems that trouble us. He recognizes that a person who is sincere enough to analyze his work and to seek help is a growing teacher, one who should be given the greatest possible consideration and encouragement.

Visits to teachers in other systems represent another source of new ideas. When we have an opportunity to see how other teachers deal with the problems that confront us, we get new insights into ways that we can work more effectively. If our school does not provide for such visits, we can at least spend our planning period in visiting other classes in our own school. However, we should first discuss this plan in a faculty meeting in order to secure the consent of other teachers. Under no circumstances should we attempt to observe the teaching being done by a teacher who does not want us in the classroom and who resents our observation.

Work on school committees is still another source of suggestions. As we sit with our colleagues and discuss solutions to school problems, we become familiar with their ideas concerning ways to work with boys and girls. We do not need to accept them all, but we can evaluate them in terms of our own purposes and values.

Material in the professional library of the school is a valuable tool. Teachers in Pennsylvania put articles in periodicals at the top of their list of helpful sources of suggestions on new teaching procedures. If we glance through the periodicals that come to the school and ask our colleagues to refer us to suggestions they discover, the new publications will bring to us a constant flow of suggestions that we may want to try.

Research in the field of human growth and development provides us with vital information that we can get from no other source. The new facts discovered often reveal the need for revising our concept of teaching methods. We are finding more and more that teaching is a process of helping boys and girls gain new experiences and analyze those experiences. As we gain new insight into how learning occurs, we have more

guidance in determining the part we should play in helping youngsters acquire experiences that bring about desirable growth.

Child-study groups help us share ideas. As we sit with fellow teachers and analyze the behavior of a single child, we grow in our understanding of all children.

We will want also to become an active participant in community affairs. As we work with the adults of the community, we increase our skill in working in groups and we gain a better understanding of the thinking and attitudes of the parents of the children with whom we work. Many teachers have undertaken summer activities that bring them into close working contact with segments of the population with which they do not ordinarily associate. Such contacts widen our understanding of the values that influence the boys and girls in our classes.

Staff meetings, when they are organized in terms of teachers' problems, are places to acquire new ideas. As we exchange experiences that have been successful or have failed, our repertoire of techniques is increased. As outside resource people are brought to the meetings to present the information in their field of specialization, the generalizations we have drawn from our experience are supplemented or challenged. One of the biggest services a consultant can offer is to raise questions or make statements which force us to rethink our position. We may decide that our previous conclusion was correct, but the reexamination process sharpens our convictions and strengthens our beliefs.

A type of in-service teacher education that has proved to be stimulating is the workshop. It is a program under the sponsorship of a school system, university, or organization to which teachers go to work on their problems or the problems of their school. Work is based on the problems of enrollees and all participants follow individual programs. Each member has an adviser who helps him plan his work and secure the assistance of the staff members who can contribute to the solution of his problem. Staff members are present to help the workshop

participants solve their problems, not to tell students what to do. More and more workshops are being organized for work in special areas such as intercultural education, world understanding, leadership, or economic education. If we choose a workshop oriented toward the general area in which our problems lie and in terms of the quality of staff available, we will find it one of the most stimulating experiences we have had. Workshops have caused many teachers to rethink their approach to education and teaching.

Any graduate work should be selected in terms of our problems and purposes. If we choose courses in terms of our present problems of teaching rather than a vague, long-range hope of being something we are not, such as an administrator, our graduate experience will supply additional ideas.

One of the best ways of growing and increasing our fund of ideas is to participate in experimental studies seeking solutions to problems with which we are concerned. An examination of the history of staffs in schools that have participated in experimental projects leads to the conclusion that such participation produces people who are stronger and more capable than they were before the experimentation started. We grow as we try something new with consultant service to help us find our solutions. Through participation in an experimental study, we secure additional resource help for ourselves.

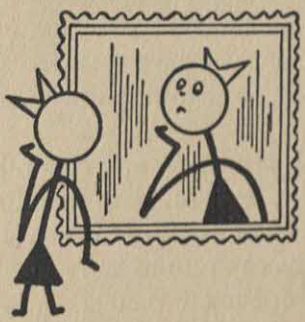
Each of us will grow in different ways, but an essential quality is humbleness, an appreciation that there are better answers than we have, that any person we meet may contribute the word or fragment of the idea that will open our eyes to new possibilities. An essential facet of creative improvement in our ways of working lies in a constant search for new ideas.

How Do We Become More Mature?

To be more effective teachers we must seek greater maturity as individuals. If we are immature, it is hard for pupils to live in a mature manner.

To be more mature we will:

—*seek to develop sufficient social skills* to provide us a greater feeling of adequacy in social situations. Much of the shyness and embarrassment felt by some teachers comes from a lack of sufficient practice in basic social skills which would enable them to enjoy living and thinking with others. An unskilled dancer often fails to enjoy the rhythm of the dance



because of his need to concentrate on steps. A girl attending her first tea may worry so much about social etiquette that she cannot enjoy the conversation. A teacher with a strong background of information but with so little social poise that he is unable to go to the home of one of his pupils for dinner or to other social affairs is not able to help young people mature socially. Such a teacher will be completely at a loss at a school dance or banquet. Without essential social skills, we lack the poise commonly associated with maturity.

—*be more willing to accept ourselves as having worth.* As we begin to respect our own personalities, we cease imitating other people. As we copy what the "superior" teacher in the next room is doing, we deny the worth of our own judgment and teaching procedures. When, on the other hand, we begin to make judgments concerning our teaching in terms of the evidence of pupil growth toward desired objectives and then revise our procedures on the basis of the evidence, we are behaving as mature persons.

—*seek to become more self-directing.* A mature person does

not always want to be told what to do. He wants to work out for himself the best solution. An immature person is likely to be dependent, leaning on someone else for specific directions and information as to steps to be taken. Achievement of a sense of self-direction gives purpose and meaning to life for the individual.

—*seek to improve our problem-solving technique.* To have self-direction we must be willing to work out solutions to our own problems. Unless we have learned to make intelligent decisions, we cannot be mature participants in a democratic society or school.

—*use supervisors, principals, and college personnel for suggestions* rather than asking someone in authority to tell us the exact steps which we must take. An immature persons wants someone to whom he can turn to find relief from his problems. As children, we turned to our mothers or fathers when we got into difficulty and expected them to work out the problem for us. As we became more mature, we accepted greater responsibility for solving the difficulties which confronted us. A teacher who always wants the principal to make his decisions for him or who depends on his supervisor for judgments concerning the quality of his teaching is displaying qualities of an immature person.

—*seek to become more willing to accept reality.* As children, some individuals live much of their time in a dream world made up of the companions they would like to have and of an environmental setting in which they would most like to find themselves. Some individuals continue to insist on looking at the world through rose-colored glasses and on believing that things are the way they want them in their dreams, whether they actually are that way or not.

As teachers, we must accept reality. We must recognize that we cannot have all the equipment or materials we want. Only then can we begin to make the most effective use of the materials that are available. An immature teacher is always inclined

to place the blame for lack of supplies on the administration or community, while making little or no constructive effort himself to improve the situation. Maturity involves facing the realities of the existing environment, our own shortcomings, weaknesses, and strengths, and working with our full talents to achieve the kinds of reality which we desire.

—*recognize our needs and shortcomings by volunteering special skills which we possess,* in order to make up for our lack of ability in other areas. At the same time, we will seek training which will help us overcome our handicaps.

—*attempt to face our frustrations.* This does not mean that we must accept complacently the unsatisfactory qualities of our situations, but it does mean that we should be willing to take a long-term view and to engage in a lengthy, constructive process. Youth is inclined to be impatient. Youth wants to move into the high-salaried bracket very quickly or to bring about a complete social change overnight. As we achieve maturity, however, we recognize that things are likely not to happen that fast and we begin to see the importance of small gains and to use them as ways of achieving the long-term values for which we strive.

—*try to take disappointments without becoming completely discouraged.* Here the old quotation, "The man worth while is the man who can smile when everything goes dead wrong," applies. Any child or youth can be happy in a situation in which his slightest wish is fulfilled. A mature person is one who can face disappointment, upset, and heartache and still build a world out of the satisfactory features of the situation.

—*try to become less egocentric.* A baby sees and feels only the things that come into immediate contact with him. A child judges everything by whether it satisfies his immediate desires. Many people remain largely egocentric through a major portion of their lives. A mature person recognizes that the world is not centered around him. He begins to see himself as making a contribution to the group and to the on-going process

of civilization. He recognizes that he has a part to play, that he has value as a unique individual, but he also sees the center of emphasis on the social group of which he is a part. As we develop this concept we begin to put ourselves into proper reference to life.

A pre-service teacher, commenting on a teachers' meeting she had attended, said, "The best part of all was the feeling that in my own small way I was able to contribute and to know that people were listening to my questions and comments with sincere interest."

Some teachers are inclined to be prima donnas. They are able to do creative work only so long as everything is going their way and everyone praises their efforts. It takes a much more mature person to be able to work cooperatively with the rest of the faculty and to share with others the credit for the program. The immature person usually wants assurance that others always identify him as being the one who has made the greatest contribution and who is the most creative person.

—*seek to control ourselves and to adjust our behavior to the situation.* A child may lose his temper and engage in extremely antisocial behavior in almost any situation. As we mature we learn to distinguish among kinds of situations and to recognize that some types of behavior are appropriate on one occasion and not on another. Maturing involves learning enough of the social cues to be able to get the insight that makes possible interpretation of various situations and the development of sufficient self-control to abide by the insight that we have.

—*work to achieve the type of social relationships that make it possible for everyone involved in a situation to attain the greatest possible degree of satisfaction of his needs.* Our insight in a social situation depends largely upon understanding our own needs and the needs of others. Viewed in this light, maturity includes understanding of others and ability to get along with others.

Maturity involves working out satisfactory relationships with

persons who may have different viewpoints, different religions, different colors. If we are immature, we tend to be afraid of difference and to insist on staying with persons whose beliefs or backgrounds are similar to ours. We tend also to fear the unknown and we attempt to take steps to insure that we shall not come in contact with persons unlike ourselves. These steps may even involve aggression against persons who are different or the calling of these persons by derogatory names. If we are immature, we may cause social restrictions to be established which prevent development of better understanding. Maturity involves willingness to accept the worth of other points of view and of other ways of life and willingness to analyze objectively the extent to which different groups can contribute to the attainment of the satisfaction of all.

—*seek to develop,* through objective analysis of our experiences and of the different points of view with which we have come in contact, *conscious values which give purpose, direction, and meaning to our living.* An immature person accepts the joys or the sorrows of the moment in terms of whether they contribute to his immediate satisfaction. A mature person has a life-purpose and uses the experiences of the moment for the fulfillment of that purpose as well as for the satisfactions that come out of the immediate occasion.

If we do not have a consistent set of values, we can make decisions based only on expediency. For this reason, other staff members can seldom depend upon us.

> Recently, a principal was confronted with a problem concerning the type of poster to be used for getting books returned to the library. One teacher objected to the snooping, finger-pointing, accusing, guilt-fixing, teacher vs. pupil implications of the posters. The principal's reaction was, "I don't see anything wrong with the posters. They get the books back, don't they?" His decision was made entirely in terms of how well the posters accomplished his desire, not in terms of the learnings the pupils might derive from the experience. Either he had not thought through the values he held or he was not

using the values to which he gave verbal allegiance as the basis for his decisions.

—*recognize that maturity is never attained,* that through new experiences and new insights, we develop a new picture of what maturity can mean. Although at the age of twenty-five we may have felt relatively mature, at thirty-five we may see new possibilities of growth which cause us to look back at our maturation attained at the age of twenty-five and feel that it represented a very immature stage in our life-pattern.

We grow more mature as long as we continue to recognize that we do not have the final answers about the best methods of teaching or about solutions to world problems. We become increasingly mature through humble and intelligent application of the scientific method. We help children grow as we provide mature leadership.

How Do We Improve Our Method?

If we want to continue to grow, we engage in a constant process of experimentation. We recognize that our present teaching method represents the best working hypothesis that we have been able to formulate and that it will change as a result of additional experience as we continue to analyze it critically. Whenever we begin to feel that we have achieved the best possible method, we have begun to decrease in our teaching efficiency. Whenever we start trying to teach a new class in exactly the way we have taught preceding classes, we lose our creative spark and begin to make teaching hack work and drudgery. If we want to continue to improve our teaching processes, we need to look upon our meeting with each new class as a challenge to develop more effective ways of working than we have been able to achieve with any previous class.

We can't change our teaching practices all at once. Our present pattern consists of a background of beliefs that we have and an organization of the skills that we have developed. If we try to change from what we are doing to something totally

different, we become lost in the process and do not do any of the things we try to do efficiently.

Before we attempt any change, we need to be very clear about the type of pupil behavior that we are trying to promote. If we decide that we are going to try something that we have not been doing, we need to plan how we are going to collect evidence that pupils grow or fail to grow in the direction that we hope they will. We continue to revise our teaching procedures in light of the evaluation of results. When we see that one method is ineffective in promoting the type of pupil growth that we seek, we abandon it. When we find that other techniques that we use are effective, we increase our use of those techniques.

We alter our pattern of teaching a little bit at a time, undertaking the things we can do without shaking the whole structure of our method. As we test out a new idea that we have and find that it works, we incorporate it into our pattern. But if we try a hunch that doesn't work, we discard it.

The procedure described above is *experimental teaching* and through it we increase the efficiency of the teaching-learning situation.

It is the teaching that results in better schools.

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(3) Evaluation
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Brown, Carl F., "A Rural Community Goes to School," *Educational Leadership,* 7 (February 1950), pp. 307-11.

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Appendix A

Significant Research

Alper, Thelma G., "Memory for Completed and Incompleted Tasks as a Function of Personality: An Analysis of Group Data," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,* 41 (October 1946), pp. 403-20.

In a study of the effect of self-esteem on intellectual performance and memory, ten college students took difficult tests under two conditions: (a) a relaxed condition, with emphasis on helping to standardize the material, and (b) an "ego involved" condition, in which tasks were presented as an intelligence test and on which the subject failed miserably in the presence of a more successful contemporary. Under the threatening conditions, the subjects did significantly less well on the tests and also remembered them less well at a later time.

Back, Kurt, "Interpersonal Relations in a Discussion Group," *Journal of Social Issues,* 4 (Spring 1948), pp. 61-65.

The discussion patterns of two groups were studied with regard to distribution of participation, type of participation, and direction of participation. It was found that:

(1) by dominating the discussion the highest contributors could make their position permanent.
(2) faculty leaders exert a distinct influence on the participation pattern of members.
(3) as faculty leaders contribute a higher percentage of work-centered and friendly remarks than the group, the group's percentage of work-centered and friendly remarks increased.
(4) a greater amount of negatively toned responses tends to anchor the relative positions in the group; greater emphasis on friendly interactions assures a smooth change in positions.

Barker, Roger, Dembo Tamara, Kurt Lewin, and Erick Wright, "Experimental Studies of Frustration in Young Children," in *Readings in Social Psychology*, pp. 283-90. New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1947.

Two groups of children, aged two to six, were studied in a non-frustrating and a frustrating situation.

The non-frustrating situation was in a standardized playroom under conditions of free play; the frustrating play situation was in the same room with the same toys, but with a number of more attractive, but inaccessible toys, present. After the children were allowed to play with the more desirable toys, a wire-net partition was lowered and locked in place, shutting the children from the more desirable toys. Free play activities and barrier and escape activity were observed.

The experiment was conducted with a group of thirty children and repeated with a group of seventy-eight different children.

The mean regression in constructiveness of play from the non-frustrating to the frustrating situation was over four times the standard error. The mean regression amounted to 17.3 months of mental age.

The results indicate that frustration not only affects actions involved in achieving inaccessible goals, such as attempts to find roundabout routes or aggression against physical or social barriers, but that it may also affect behavior not directly frustrated or involved in overcoming the frustration. They suggest that the level of intellectual functioning is dependent upon the immediately existing situation and that the total situation is important in hindering or promoting the child's creative achievement.

Emotional expression was affected by frustration. With frustration came a proportionate decrease in happiness of mood and an increase in restlessness, hypertension, and aggressiveness.

The amount of intellectual regression and the amount of increase in negative emotionality were positively related to the strength of the frustration.

Beier, Ernest G., "The Effect of Induced Anxiety on Some Aspects of Intellectual Functioning: A Study of the Relationship Between Anxiety and Rigidity," *American Psychologist*, 4 (July 1949), pp. 273-74.

A group of women graduate students were given a mildly unfavorable interpretation of the Rorschach results. On a series of tests requiring attention, reasoning, and flexibility, given immediately afterward, the experimental subjects did less well than a matched unthreatened group. The test performance of the anxiety-threatened group was best described as rigid and poorly organized.

Bettelheim, Bruno, and Emmy Sylvester, "Therapeutic Influence of the Group on the Individual," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 17 (1947), pp. 684-92.

This was a study based on experiences with emotionally disturbed children at the Orthogenic School, University of Chicago, Illinois. No organic cases or children with less than normal intelligence were admitted. The range was from seven to twelve years, with the children usually divided into groups of six.

Group situations were permitted to evolve casually and naturally from activities of the children, but they were modified and planned in accordance with the child's existing needs.

The therapeutic influence of the groups came from the active influence of the group or individual members thereof, and from non-positive actions or attitudes. Value came in:

(1) Permissiveness of group support.
(2) Group permitted gain of status.
(3) Group assisted in the integration of hostile tendencies.
(4) Group assisted in the integration of contradictory tendencies.
(5) Helped face the traumatic past by a secure present.
(6) Gave strength through belonging.

In each of the above instances, the authors gave examples of children who were deviates who were helped by the group. They concluded that a group with good social climate and adequate assistance, whether permanent or not, constitutes a reservoir of strength from which the individual child may draw support for his new steps in mastery.

Bills, Robert, "Non-Directive Play Therapy with Retarded Readers," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 14 (April 1950), pp. 140-49.

The study tested the hypothesis that the difficulty which some retarded readers show is due mainly to inconsistencies within their

value systems, and if non-directive play therapy can aid the individual in changing his attitude toward self or in re-evaluating his self concept, then corresponding changes will occur in subject-matter ability after non-directive play therapy.

Third-graders with a discrepancy between their mental age and reading age were chosen for study. They were studied over three periods of thirty school days each. During the first thirty days no therapy was given and the growth of eighteen pupils was measured; during the second thirty days eight of the pupils were given six individual and three group therapy sessions while the remaining ten pupils served as a comparison group; during the third thirty days all children followed the normal school procedures.

It was found that the group receiving therapy made greater gains in the therapy period, significant at the .001 level of probability, than in the control period.

Buck, Nina M., and Ralph H. Ojemann, "The Relationship Between Ability in Scientific Thinking and Behavior in Situations Involving Choice," *Journal of Experimental Education*, 11 (December 1942), pp. 215-19.

Twenty-three high school freshmen were studied to determine the relationship between ability in scientific thinking and behavior in situations involving choice. A paper-and-pencil test of scientific thinking was given and scored. Later, two observers recorded and scored the behavior of the students in ten performance situations. Each was judged on the nature of his approach to the problem and his attempt to validate his choice scientifically.

The correlation between thinking scores and behavior scores was low, .31. The two subjects having the highest thinking scores had quite low scores on the behavior tests.

The outstanding difference between high and low score subjects on the behavior situations seemed to be a well-formed purpose which was the subject's own and which he was attempting to carry out.

Burrell, Anne Porter, "Facilitating Learning Through Emphasis on Meeting Children's Basic Emotional Needs: An In-Service Training Program," *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 24 (March 1951), pp. 381-93.

The study listed the hypothesis "that one source of difficulty in learning relates to the status of the child's emotional needs and that serious frustration of these needs may be one of the primary causes of failure to learn." Three teachers, one fourth-, one fifth-, and one sixth-grade, and their classes constituted the experimental group. Three teachers and classes of similar ability and background served as a comparison group. Each experimental teacher selected five pupils to study and to attempt to help. In addition, the teachers met frequently with a consultant to discuss the pupils and the general problem of meeting emotional needs. Tests—The Wishing Well, the Ohio Social Acceptance Scale, Otis Quick Scoring Ability Test, Pintner General Ability, Stanford Achievement Test and the Wetzelgrid—were used at the beginning and end of the semester. "From the summarized data it would seem that the work with the selected children of the experimental group substantiated the hypothesis that guided this study; that an attack upon the problem of improving learning through emphasis on meeting the child's emotional needs by concentrating attention upon a few selected students who had learning difficulties, would produce changes in social acceptability and achievement. Furthermore, working with selected students in the experimental groups not only resulted in improvement in terms of social acceptance, learning and personal adjustment of the few students but resulted in gains experienced in these areas by the members of the total experimental classes."

Faw, Volney, "A Psychotherapeutic Method of Teaching Psychology," *American Psychologist* (April 1949), pp. 104-09.

From a comparison of the results in three sections of a psychology class (one a student-centered group handled in a non-directive therapeutic fashion, one an instructor-centered group handled in a directive fashion, and one taught by alternating the two methods) it was found that: the student-centered group had 2½ times as many student comments as the instructor-centered class; the student-centered class tended to express personal feelings and experiences in connection with the topic being discussed, whereas the instructor-centered group seemed to discuss the issues in a purely intellectual way with few references to their own experiences; the student-centered group expressed preference for student-centered discussions by a ratio of 29 to 2 and the combined method favored

student-centered discussion 22 to 11; in all three examinations given, the student-centered group scored higher than the other groups.

Fleming, Robert, "Psychosomatic Illness and Emotional Needs," *Educational Leadership,* IX (November 1951), pp. 119-23.

Thirty-eight children with a history of psychosomatic manifestations such as stomach upsets, allergies, kidney difficulties, and frequent headaches were identified in an elementary school by the school health authorities. Twenty-six of the pupils were considered in an experimental group and twelve in a comparison group. Teachers of pupils in the experimental group engaged in an in-service program consisting of a series of conferences devoted to discussions of the emotional needs of children and their implications for working with children. Also, teachers of the experimental group analyzed a series of human relations films.

Teachers with the experimental group sought to work with pupils in a manner "which would free them, which would make them secure, which would help them like school, which would help them recognize success, which would help them work on things for which they saw purpose, which would give them opportunities to see more clearly what they were doing in school, which would help them become better participants in their group."

Ninety-six per cent of the children in the experimental group showed significant decrease in the intensity of the symptoms, whereas fifty per cent of the children in the comparison group showed significant improvement. In terms of frequency of symptoms, sixty-six per cent of the experimental group decreased from daily manifestations to occasional manifestations, whereas forty-one per cent of the comparison group continued daily manifestations. Attendance of the experimental group improved forty-nine per cent over attendance during the same period the preceding year. The comparison group had a forty per cent loss in attendance over the previous year.

Nine parents made up a sub-group in the experimental group to test the hypothesis that the teacher plus parent would result in more change. Individual conferences were held with the parents and they saw some of the human relations films. In terms of attendance, decrease in intensity and frequency of symptoms, the children

whose parents and teachers worked together showed greater improvement.

French, John, "Organized and Unorganized Groups Under Fear and Frustration," *Studies in Topological and Vector Psychology,* University of Iowa Studies. Studies in Child Welfare, XX. Iowa City, Iowa: 1944, pp. 229-308.

Eight organized groups and eight groups in which members did not know each other were presented with three insoluble problems and asked to solve one in forty-five minutes. At the end of the time, the experimenters gave each participant a questionnaire to fill out, told them the experiment was over, went out, and locked the door. Smoke was poured into the locked room and fire sirens were sounded.

The group activities were observed in the frustration and fear situations through a one-way screen and a recording was made of the discussion. The actions and comments were classified into four categories:

(1) "We" feelings and motivation.
(2) Motivation and frustration.
(3) Frustration and aggression.
(4) Interdependence and aggression.

The organized group reactions fell most frequently in the first category, while the unorganized groups displayed behavior that could be classified in the last three categories.

Hurlock, Elizabeth, "An Evaluation of Certain Incentives Used in School Work," *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 16 (March 1925), pp. 145-59.

Four groups all did the same tasks in arithmetic. The first group was praised for the improvement they had made and encouraged to do better, another was reproved before other pupils for their many careless mistakes and the inferior quality of their work, while a third group was ignored in that nothing was said about their work although they heard the remarks made to the others. The fourth group, a control group, worked in another room under usual conditions. All three experimental groups did better than the control. The praised and reproved groups improved rapidly at first, but

from then on, while the praised group continued to improve, the work of the reproved group declined. The work of the ignored group was not as good as that of the reproved group.

Johnson, A. D., "An Attempt To Change Interpersonal Relationships," *Sociometry*, 2 (July 1939), pp. 43-48.

Two attempts were made to bring isolates into groups of fourteen-year-old boys. In one case, an adult group leader worked directly with the isolate and in the other the youth group leader, as shown by sociograms, assumed the responsibility of working the isolate into group acceptance. In the situation in which the adult leader attempted to work directly with the isolate, no change resulted. The youth group leader was able to help the isolate win some acceptance by the group.

Kelley, Earl C., *Education For What Is Real.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947.

Dr. Adelbert Ames of the Hanover Institute has developed some experimental demonstrations of the principles which govern the development of perceiving. Material objects are presented to a subject in such a manner as to restrict his obtaining all the clues he would ordinarily secure. Different observers perceive and interpret the objects differently. Dr. Kelley interprets the demonstrations as follows:

"We do not get our perceptions from the things around us but the perceptions come from us." "Things around us have no meaning except as we ascribe meaning to them."

"The name and position we give to the object do not lie in the objects themselves, but in what we ascribe to them out of our past experience."

"The only reality we can experience is what we make of the objects around us, and is always unique for each of us."

"Perception is a directive for action." "The only way to know perception is faulty or valid is by action. . . . Reality comes from what we make of our clues, received by our sense organs, when we act upon them."

"Selection of the factors in the environment is determined by a combination of past experience and purpose."

Klugman, Samuel, "Cooperative vs. Individual Efficiency in Problem-Solving," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 35 (January 1944), pp. 91-100.

One hundred and thirty-six children from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, with I.Q.'s between 90 and 109, solved arithmetic problems working alone and in pairs. When pupils worked together, they solved more problems correctly but took a longer time. Klugman concluded that the higher scores and longer time needed to solve the problems were due to the presentation, discussion, rejection, and acceptance of the larger number of possible answers which occurred when children were working together.

Kvaraceus, W. C., "Delinquency—A By-Product of the School," *School and Society*, 59 (May 13, 1944), pp. 450-51.

From a comparison of the records of 761 delinquents handled by the Passaic Children's Bureau over a five-year period with the records of a control group from the general school population, it was found that: 40 times as many delinquent boys repeated three or more school terms than other boys; 75 times more delinquent girls repeated three or more school terms than other girls; other students received high marks 32 times more frequently than delinquents; most of the delinquents left school as soon as they became sixteen while few of the other children did; 60 per cent of the delinquents expressed a marked dislike for school or for some persons closely connected with the school or classroom; *there was a significant decrease in the delinquency rate during the months when school was not in session.* It was concluded that aggressive behavior (delinquent conduct) is a result of frustration, and is believed to be frequently caused or brought about by the school.

Lewin, Kurt, "Experiments in Social Space," *Harvard Educational Review*, 9 (January 1939), p. 31.

An experiment was conducted by Lippitt and White at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station to observe the effects of democratic and autocratic atmospheres on clubs that had been experimentally created. Observers noted the properties of groups.

Two groups of boys and girls, ten to eleven years of age, were selected for mask-making clubs. Both groups were equated on such qualities as leadership and interpersonal relations. Eleven

meetings of the groups were held. The democratically operated group always met two days before the autocratically controlled group. The democratic group chose its activities freely. The autocratic group was ordered to do whatever the democratic group had done. All factors except the group atmosphere were kept constant.

In the democratic group all policies were a matter of group determination; alternate procedures were suggested and the group could choose the course it wanted to follow; group members were free to work with whomever they chose; and the leader attempted to be a group member, giving objective praise and criticism. In the authoritarian group the leader determined the policy, dictated the techniques to be used, told each member with whom he should work, criticized an individual's activity without giving reasons, and remained aloof from group participation. During the meeting of the clubs, observers noted the number of incidents of aggression and the actions of the leader per unit of time. In both groups the leader was still leading. Both leaders were less submissive than average members of the group, but the difference between the ordinary group member and the leader was much less pronounced in the democratic situation. The autocratic leader took twice as much action toward members of the group as did the democratic leader.

In the authoritarian group almost thirty times as much hostile domination occurred—such as demands for attention and hostile criticism in child-to-child relationships—as in the democratic group. The democratic group exhibited more cooperation, praise of the other person's work, constructive suggestions, and matter-of-fact behavior. "We" centered statements, rather than "I" centered, occurred twice as often in the democratic group as in the autocratic group.

Lewin, Kurt, "The Dynamics of Group Action," *Educational Leadership*, 1 (January 1944), pp. 195-200.

An effort was made to change students from the consumption of white to the consumption of wholewheat bread. From each student was obtained a rating of his eagerness to reach the goal and his like or dislike of wholewheat bread as compared with white bread. The results showed that after requests to change, the eagerness to succeed was lowest in the individuals who disliked wholewheat

bread most and that it increased with the degree of liking for whole-wheat bread. After group decision, however, the eagerness to reach a group goal was largely independent of personal likes or dislikes. The experimental studies indicated that it was easier to change ideology or cultural habits by dealing with groups than with individuals.

Lippitt, Ronald, and Ralph K. White, "An Experimental Study of Leadership and Group Life," *Readings in Social Psychology* (Newcomb and Harley, editors). New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1947, pp. 315-30.

An attempt was made to determine the reaction of four clubs of three variations in adult leadership—"democratic," "authoritarian," and "laissez-faire."

The adult-leader role was formed to be a strong determiner to the pattern of social interaction and the emotional development of the group. Four clear-cut types of social atmosphere emerged:

(1) Agressive reaction to the autocratic leader with aggression toward out-groups.
(2) Apathetic reaction to the autocratic leader with internal expressions of aggression.
(3) Reaction to democratic leader with attempts to overcome sources of frustrations.
(4) Reaction to laissez-faire leader with attempts to overcome sources of frustration.

Previous group history and preceding social climates had an important effect in determining the group's perception of a leader's behavior and its reactions.

Mann, Frank A., "The Frequency of Unmet Emotional Needs as Evidenced in Children's Behavior," *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, 24 (March 1951), pp. 414-24.

A study was made of 1358 children from six schools to see where they manifest behavior thought to indicate unmet emotional needs and the relationship of this behavior to social status, acceptance, and intelligence. The population consisted of 743 boys and 615 girls from 52 classes ranging from kindergarten through the ninth grade. The results of teacher observation, the Wishing Well (a test

of emotional needs), the Ohio Social Acceptance, a test designed to determine friendship patterns within a classroom, Warner's Index of Status-Characteristics, and intelligence quotients were used as data. Of the sampling, twenty per cent were found to be unusually aggressive, seven per cent submissive, eight per cent consistently withdrawing, and two per cent showed symptoms of psychosomatic illness. The most prevalent unmet needs were reported to be: for belonging, for achievement, for love and affection, and for understanding. Test results indicated that the need for understanding was unmet in the greatest percentage of aggressive boys and that the need for achievement was unmet in the greatest percentage of aggressive girls.

Using the Index of Status Characteristics, the social class status of 506 children in two schools was determined. A greater percentage of children in the lower classes were characterized by teacher as aggressive. Symptoms of psychosomatic illness seemed to be concentrated in the three lower class groups.

Teachers did not see as many unmet needs in pupils from their own social status, in pupils with highest ranges of intelligence, in pupils not accepted by their sex. Test results disagreed with the teacher's judgment in many cases in these areas.

McClelland, David C., and John W. Atkinson, "The Projective Expression of Needs: Part I, The Effect of Different Intensities of the Hunger Drive on Perception," *Journal of Psychology*, 25 (January-April 1948), pp. 205-22.

Atkinson, John W., and David C. McClelland, "The Projective Expression of Needs: Part II, The Effect of Different Intensities of the Hunger Drive on Thematic Apperception," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 38 (December 1948), pp. 643-658.

McClelland, David C., John W. Atkinson, and Russell W. Clark, "The Projective Expression of Needs: Part III, The Effect of Ego-Involvement, Success, and Failure on Perception," *Journal of Psychology*, 27 (January-April 1949), pp. 311-30.

McClelland, David C., and others, "The Projective Expression of Needs: Part IV, The Effect of the Need for Achievement on Thematic Perception," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 39 (April 1949), pp. 242-55.

Perception was tested by having the subjects guess the nature

of a "faint," really non-existent image projected on a screen and by having them make up stories based on somewhat ambiguous (thematic apperception) pictures. Hungrier subjects, deprived of food for sixteen hours, "saw" more food-related objects on the blank screen and used more food-deprivation themes in the stories based on the pictures.

In other comparable studies, students who had just experienced failure on tests showed by their perceptions and stories greater need for achievement than did control subjects.

McLendon, Ida Ruth, *An Investigation of Factors Associated with the Social Acceptance of Children in the Intermediate Grades of Hamilton, Ohio.* Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University (unpublished doctoral dissertation), 1947.

Dr. McLendon studied the relationship between social class status and social acceptance and subject-matter achievement among 4,000 fourth-, fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade students in a midwestern city of 50,000 population. Under her classification the students were categorized in four social class groups. She found that social acceptance and academic achievement tended to be in direct proportion to social class status; acceptance for boys and girls decreases proportionately with decline in social status; the mean level of achievement declines as the prestige of the social class decreases but high achievement occurs in each class; in the two upper classes girls received higher scores on the average than boys, but in the two lower classes boys obtained higher scores than girls.

Moreno, J. L., and Helen H. Jennings, "Sociometric Control Studies of Grouping and Regrouping," *Sociometry Monographs,* No. 7. Beacon House, 1947, pp. 20-29.

Three groups of girls, each group consisting of sixteen persons, were studied for thirty-two weeks. The first group, the control group, was assigned to cottages without any sociometric testing or design. The second group, Group A, was assigned to cottages on the basis of sociometric procedure, but not on a maximum affinity basis. The third group, Group B, was assigned according to sociometric procedure, and maximum affinity was carefully adhered to. All groups were checked with sociometric measures every eight weeks.

It was found that the tested subjects find a better position in the group from the start. The sociometric assignment protects the newcomer against social blocking at an early stage. They are integrated with the group more quickly; the greater the original affinity between a newcomer and the prominent members of the group, the better that subject is accepted by the whole group; hit-or-miss assignment appears to facilitate social blocking and often establishes an isolated position; sociometric studies can cut down some of the adjustment otherwise needed.

Ojeman, Ralph, and Frances Wilkenson, "The Effect on Pupil Growth of an Increase in Teacher Understanding of Pupil Behavior," *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 8 (December 1938), pp. 143-47.

The data in this study are consistent in showing that when teachers learn to know their pupils as personalities in their home environments, the teachers tend to become more effective guides for learning. The pupils achieve more in academic areas and teachers become more effective in helping pupils improve their personalities.

Park, Lawrence, "Prejudice and Unmet Emotional Needs," *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 24 (March 1951), pp. 407-13.

The study explored the hypothesis that as children's emotional needs are better met, these children's attitudes toward minority groups change in a positive direction. Six teachers with six classes (fourth, fifth, and sixth) participated in a semester-long attempt to meet the emotional needs of selected pupils in their class more adequately. Six other teachers and their classes were used to widen the sample. Tests (Wishing Well, Human Relations Inventory, and Ohio Social Acceptance Scale) and data from personal folders were used to determine position of student before and after the semester. No mention was made to the teachers involved of the hypothesis being tested—emphasis was on meeting emotional needs.

It was found that (1) children whose needs were better met during the interim of the study made significant decrease in their attitude of prejudice, particularly toward the Negro, (2) children whose needs were apparently less well met increased their prejudice

toward "negro people," (3) children whose emotional needs didn't change also did not change in their attitudes toward this group. The relationship was not so strong in regard to Jewish and Catholic groups, where the attitude of prejudice was less in evidence.

Rainey, Victor C., "Self Reference in Counseling Interviews," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 12 (May–June 1948), pp. 153-63.

An analysis was made of 111 recorded interviews of fourteen counseling clients for statements showing the person's attitude toward himself. In successful counseling cases there was a marked shift from an unfavorable to favorable self-concept, which was absent in unsuccessful cases. Rainey concluded that a person's self-concept was a core factor in his personality organization.

Rogers, Carl R., "Mental Health in Three Elementary Schools," *Journal of Educational Research*, 33 (March 1944), pp. 545-48.

In three elementary schools with a total of 1542 children it was found that: one-third of the children were regarded as problems by teachers; thirty per cent showed evidences of being poorly adjusted though not to a serious degree; twelve per cent were seriously maladjusted and showed evidence of poor mental health.

Rogers, Carl R., Bill L. Kell, and Helen McNeil, "The Role of Self Understanding in the Prediction of Behavior," *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 12 (May–June 1948), pp. 174-86.

A number of delinquent children were rated on a number of factors including physical status, family record, social influences, education, and self-insight. Self-insight meant the degree to which the child understood his own situation and problems. An independent follow-up study rated the children's later readjustments, which were then correlated with the factors in their histories. A youngster's self-insight was found to be the best prediction of his later adjustment. His social experiences and family record were also related to the outcome, but education and economic and physical factors were not.

Rosenthal, David, and Charles Cofer, "The Effect on Group Performance of an Indifferent and Neglectful Attitude Shown by One Group Member," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 33 (October 1948), pp. 568-77.

Twelve control and twelve experimental groups were established from male members of a psychology course. All groups were given the information that they were participating in a dart-throwing experiment to compare the intellectual and motor processes of college students with those of different academic, occupational, and social status. All groups were encouraged to attain at a maximum.

In the initial tests the control and experimental groups were equal in ability.

The difference in groups was that a "plant," who after the initial test displayed indifference, neglect, and negativism but not to a sufficient degree to cause isolation, was placed in each experimental group. Nine tests were given to each of the groups.

Although the "plant" achieved on an average with his group, his indifference and neglect provoked deterioration of motivation toward group goals as well as disintegration of commonality of group thought and feeling.

Groups of five showed greater increase in positive attitudes and achievement under favorable conditions than groups of four, and faster deterioration under unfavorable circumstances.

Tyler, Ralph, "Permanence of Learning," *Journal of Higher Education,* 4 (April 1933), pp. 203-05.

Eighty-two students, typical of those enrolled in the elementary zoology course at Ohio State University, were given a test at the beginning of the course, at the completion of the course, and at the end of fifteen additional months during which they had taken no zoology courses. The purpose was to determine the percentage of the gain made during the course that was lost in the ensuing fifteen months. Tyler found a seventy-seven per cent loss in ability to name animal structure appearing in diagrams, a twenty-six per cent loss in identifying technical terms, and a twenty-one per cent loss in recalling information. On the positive side, he found no loss in skill in applying principles and a twenty-five per cent gain in interpreting new experiments.

Whitner, Chester L., "Just How Much Do Teachers' Marks Vary," *Education,* 52 (October 1931), pp. 97-99.

Ten freshman English examination papers were submitted to ten instructors in English at the University of Wisconsin. Scores as-

signed one paper ranged from 20 to 65. The rank assigned a single paper by the instructors varied as much as six ranks. The study provides strong evidence of variability in the marks assigned pupil work by teachers.

Williams, Herbert D., "An Experiment in Self-Directed Education," *School and Society*, 31 (May 24, 1930), pp. 715-18.

Thirteen boys of the worst cases of juvenile delinquents, age eight to sixteen years, found in a review of 2600 cases were brought to a central technical high school for one semester. They were placed in a room set aside for them. It was equipped with desks, blackboards, and a table with supplementary readers, story books, and texts for the various grades.

No formal instruction was given. The only rule enforced was that the boys keep busy and refrain from bothering others. Otherwise, they could do as they pleased. Whenever interests were discovered they were encouraged and extra help was provided. Boys could relate their findings to the group, but no one was required to listen.

Forms A and B of the Stanford Achievement Test were administered at the beginning and end of the semester. A gain of six to fifteen months' progress in the various subjects was made in the four-month period, with the greatest gain shown in language and arithmetic and the smallest in history and literature.

Withall, John, "The Development of a Technique for the Measurement of Social-Emotional Climate in the Classroom," *Journal of Experimental Education*, 17 (March 1949), pp. 347-61.

Using the conclusion from Lippitt's study that different leadership styles produce different social climates, Withall constructed a climate index which measured whether the teacher's approach was learner-centered, problem-centered, or teacher-centered. In application of the index it was found that most of the class situations studied were teacher-centered, and that pupil reaction to the events in the class were predominantly positive when class sessions were pupil-centered and predominantly negative when the sessions were teacher-centered.

Zelany, Leslie Day, "Experimental Appraisal of a Group Learning Plan," *Journal of Educational Research*, 34 (September 1940), pp. 37-42.

Significant Research

A comparison of student growth in college sociology classes taught by the *group discussion* and the *recitation* methods was made by the author. In the five comparisons made, it was found that more sociological facts were learned, more attitudes were changed, more personalities moved in the direction of leadership, cooperation, and sociability through group discussion. Although the amount of difference between groups was not statistically significant in any case, the advantage in every case was with the group discussion procedure. Furthermore, students like the group discussion method better.

Appendix B

FLOODWOOD COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Faculty Report to Parents

Name of Student _____ Week enrolled _____ Date _____

Year _____ General Education Teacher _____

A. LEADERSHIP

1. Makes motions in class meetings	( ) regularly	( ) now & then	( ) rarely
2. Accepts class offices	( ) willingly	( ) unwillingly	( ) never
3. Participates in group discussion	( ) usually	( ) now & then	( ) seldom
4. Starts work on job at once	( ) usually	( ) now & then	( ) seldom
5. Is bossy in directing others	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
6. Helps others	( ) gladly	( ) not gladly	( ) when he must
7. Volunteers his services	( ) often	( ) seldom	( ) never
8. Picks up paper	( ) sometimes	( ) rarely	( ) never

B. ABILITY TO WORK WITH OTHERS

1. Tolerates others' suggestions	( ) usually	( ) now & then	( ) rarely
2. Listens while others speak	( ) always	( ) usually	( ) sometimes
3. Accepts committee's assignments	( ) gladly	( ) not gladly	( ) unwillingly
4. Accepts fair share of work	( ) usually	( ) now & then	( ) rarely
5. Loses his temper	( ) never	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes
6. Reacts to criticism favorably	( ) usually	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom
7. Tries to attract attention	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) often
8. Takes shower after Ph. Education	( ) always	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom
9. Keeps quiet during study time	( ) usually	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom
10. Treats classmates courteously	( ) usually	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom

C. ABILITY TO WORK BY HIMSELF

1. Does own work himself	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
2. Tries to do work before asking help	( ) seldom	( ) usually	( ) sometimes
3. Settles down to work	( ) under pressure	( ) quickly by himself	( ) slowly by himself
4. Does more than he has to do	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) never
5. Makes good use of time	( ) seldom	( ) usually	( ) sometimes
6. Sticks to his work	( ) while watched	( ) until finished	( ) until tired
7. Does neat work	( ) seldom	( ) usually	( ) sometimes
8. Works quietly	( ) seldom	( ) usually	( ) sometimes
9. Reads directions before starting to work	( ) seldom	( ) usually	( ) sometimes

D. RESPONSIBILITY

1. Handles books	( ) roughly	( ) carelessly	( ) carefully
2. Brings equipment to class	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
3. Completes work on time	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
4. Works when teacher is gone	( ) never	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
5. Follows directions	( ) poorly	( ) well	( ) exactly
6. Puts things away	( ) seldom	( ) sometimes	( ) usually
7. He is in class and on time	( ) sometimes	( ) usually	( ) always
8. Asks to be excused from class	( ) afterwards	( ) at last minute	( ) in advance
9. Throws paper on floor	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom	( ) never
10. Puts feet on furniture	( ) often	( ) sometimes	( ) never

E. COURTESY

1. Uses title in referring to staff members	( ) when reminded	( ) usually	( ) under pressure only
2. Blows bubble gum in class	( ) sometimes	( ) never	( ) often
3. Talks while another has floor	( ) sometimes	( ) never	( ) often
4. Makes requests in courteous manner	( ) sometimes	( ) often	( ) seldom
5. Wears hat in building	( ) seldom	( ) never	( ) often
6. Leaves only when dismissed	( ) often	( ) always	( ) sometimes

7. Runs in halls	( ) sometimes	( ) never	( ) usually
8. Interrupts	( ) sometimes	( ) never	( ) often
9. Is reasonably quiet and orderly	( ) often	( ) always	( ) sometimes
10. Covers mouth to cough or sneeze	( ) sometimes	( ) usually	( ) never
11. Speaks too loudly	( ) sometimes	( ) seldom	( ) always

F. FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS (in terms of pupil's own ability)

1. Uses computational skills (arithmetic)	( ) as well as expected ( ) better than expected ( ) not as well as expected
2. Expresses thoughts orally	( ) as well as expected ( ) not as well as expected ( ) better than expected
3. Expresses thoughts in writing	( ) better than expected ( ) as well as expected ( ) not as well as expected
4. Uses reading skills	( ) as well as expected ( ) better than expected ( ) not as well as expected
5. Listens	( ) as well as expected ( ) not as well as expected ( ) better than expected
6. Spells words he needs to use	( ) as well as expected ( ) better than expected ( ) not as well as expected
7. Handwriting is	( ) easy to read ( ) difficult to read ( ) impossible to read

G. THE STUDENT IS ENROLLED IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES

Activity	Faculty Comment
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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